

DEMOLITION JOB

Gerry Mooney explodes some housing myths
Pages 10&11

A CLASS FIGHTER

Judith Orr looks at Clara Zetkin's
contribution to women's liberation

Pages 14&15

Socialist Worker

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MASS LAYOFFS FOR STEEL WORKERS

SAVE JOBS

FIGHT BACK

● MARCH ● OCCUPY ● NATIONALISE



Workers call for action

by IAN DAVIES, Community
union convenor, Scunthorpe

THE STEEL industry and the communities built on it are on the brink—and without a real fight we risk going under completely.

Some 900 jobs are to go here at Tata Steel in Scunthorpe alone.

This will have a much bigger knock-on effect. Steel is an industry whole communities are built on, as mining once was.

For each worker directly employed at the steel works another four or five local jobs depend on it.

Firms

Other firms are already looking at layoffs or closures. This follows the disastrous closure of the SSI steel works in Redcar.

Tata also proposes to close its sites at Clydebridge and Dalzell. Now Caparo Industries is going into administration, threatening another 1,700 jobs.

But the government's summit for steel in Rotherham on Friday of last week was little more than a talking shop.

We've been petitioning in Scunthorpe, and we've had support from other

continued on page 3>>>

REFUGEES

Calais march
celebrates
solidarity

REFUGEES AND anti-racist activists joined forces at Britain's border in Calais last Saturday.

More than 1,000 people marched from the "jungle" camp to the terminal of the port chanting, "Refugees welcome" and, "Open the border". It was part of a trip by Stand Up to Racism.

>>Pages 4&5

LABOUR



**Cuts councils
clash with new
supporters**

JEREMY Corbyn's supporters plan to build on the success of his election campaign.

But they face challenges inside the party as well as outside.

Tension between the left and right is clear in Constituency Labour Party meetings.

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AFGHANISTAN

Leaks show US
planned deadly
hospital raid

THE US knew the target of a bombing raid in Afghanistan was a hospital days before the attack took place on 3 October.

Leaks have revealed that special operations officers had been gathering intelligence on the hospital for some time.

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THE THINGS THEY SAY

'Obscenely offensive'

Daily Mail on the UN's Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein's attack on Britain's failure to help refugees

'Palestinians are wandering around Israel stabbing Jewish pensioners to death and screaming the usual Allahu akbar rubbish'

Columnist Rod Liddle explains the Middle East with his usual charm

'Israelis are carrying umbrellas and frying pans as protection'

The Daily Mail

'Very ladylike'

Prince William on his daughter Charlotte—who is five months old

'Please circle areas of the proof which need retouching'

School photography firm Yellow offers to airbrush children's school photos

'I felt a little bit of pain but it's OK'

Toki Sekiguchi, a Tokyo schoolboy, after being floored by Tory Boris Johnson in a game of rugby



The 1% get half the wealth and half the people get 1%

A STARK report highlighting the gross inequality between the world's richest and poorest has revealed the top 1 percent of the global population now holds half its wealth.

The Credit Suisse Wealth Report found that the bottom half of adults owned less than 1 percent of world's total wealth while the richest 10 percent held 87.7 percent of it.

To be in the wealthiest half of the world's adult population, Credit Suisse calculated an individual would need £2,074. To be in the richest 10 percent, they would need £45,000.

And to be classified among the world's elite 1 percent, they would require £491,051.

Mark Goldring from Oxfam said, "This is the latest evidence that extreme inequality is out of control. Are we really happy to live in a world where the top 1 percent own half the wealth and the poorest half own just 1 percent?"

"Eyebrows were raised when earlier this year Oxfam predicted that the richest 1 percent would own more than the

BACKGROUND FIGURES

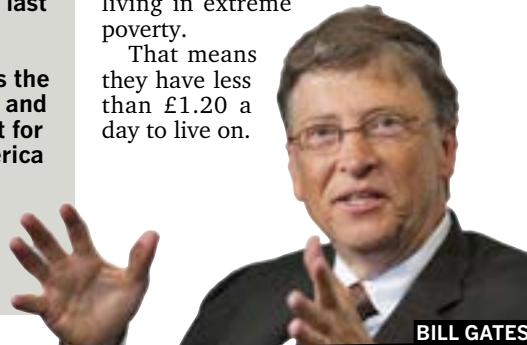
- 1 Wealth inequality is increasing. The top one percent of wealth holders now own half of all the world's wealth
- 2 The UK is ranked the sixth wealthiest country in the world, with an average wealth per adult standing at £210,132 That figure was up 1.7 percent on last year.
- 3 The net worth of households fell across the globe, by 4.7 percent, and in every region except for China and North America where wealth grew by seven percent and 4.4 percent respectively.

rest of us by 2016. The fact it has happened a year early—just weeks after world leaders agreed a global goal to reduce inequality—shows just how urgently world leaders need to tackle this problem."

Britain held 4 percent of the world's wealth, behind China at 16 per cent and the US at 12 per cent, according to the report.

The World Bank said by the end of 2015, 702 million people—9.6 percent of the world's population—will be living in extreme poverty.

That means they have less than £1.20 a day to live on.



BILL GATES

FOREIGN OFFICE cleaners were disciplined—some apparently sacked—after they wrote to foreign secretary Philip Hammond about their pay.

Someone should have told them that the chairman of the contractor they work for—Interserve—is Hammond's fellow Tory Party member, Tory peer and former Thatcher adviser and banker Lord Blackwell.

Banker

PEPSICO PAID ex-Liberal Democrat leader Nick Clegg £22,000 for taking part in an event in July discussing Britain's future in the European Union.

PepsiCo said that Clegg had been invited to take part because of his "expertise" on European politics. Whoops.

Apostrophes for the grammar lobby

THE DAILY Mail newspaper came out against academies last week. Sort of. Academies that Muslims are involved in, anyway.

It reported "fears" as a "Muslim academy trust" prepares to take over three community secondary schools.

It pointed out that private sponsors can introduce new religious education lessons, and alter sex and relationship education. For some reason the Mail hasn't seemed too concerned about any of this up until now.

A YEAR is a long time in politics. At the 2014 Conservative Party conference Nicky Morgan said, "There aren't going to be any more grammar schools under me...I am resistant to selective education."

This month Morgan gave the go ahead to the first new grammar school in 50 years. Meanwhile a sign in the House of Commons for a meeting of the Grammar School Heads' Association read "Grammar School Head's Association".



Nicky Morgan

Standards slipping in the standards

Troublemaker regular Geoffrey Cox is the highest-earning MP. He earns hundreds of thousands of pounds a year for his work as a lawyer.

Cox has, on at least one occasion, failed to register his outside earnings within the 28 days required.

So he has resigned from the House of Commons Committee on Standards and referred himself to the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards. The Committee

on Standards oversees the Register of Members' Financial Interests.

The same Register of Members' Financial Interests that Cox forgot to register the £325,000 he earned too.

DAVID Cameron hoped his adventure with a pig's head would be forgotten. But the Oxford Union recently held a debate on, "What happened at university should stay at university." Tory business secretary Sajid Javid spoke in favour. Troublemaker wonders why?



Geoffrey Cox

Increase in secret trials

THE NUMBER of official applications for secret court hearings more than doubled in the past year, according to the Ministry of Justice.

Two cases resulted in closed judgments where the full decision was not published. That means the defendant isn't even allowed to know why they lost.

In the year 2013/2014, there were five. Over the same period last year there were 11.

Secret intelligence can be introduced by the government in closed hearings during a secret case. But it will only be seen by the judge and security-cleared "special advocate".



FAT CAT OF THE WEEK

Tony Blair

● A White House memo has "revealed" that Tony Blair backed war in Iraq a year before he launched it in 2003.

● He was happy to suggest ways of PR-ing the conflict to make it publicly acceptable.

● Expect some mild tut-tutting when the Chilcot inquiry reports sometime in the 23rd century.

Tory planning row gets to court

RICH TORY toff Robert Vaudry has been charged with pushing a 70 year old in a long-running planning row.

Vaudry was a private secretary to former Tory prime minister Edward Heath. He wants to turn his £1 million property in Dorsington into a wedding and conference venue—but villagers object.

The villager said Vaudry's "demeanor was aggressive" during the alleged confrontation in March. Vaudry denies the charge and is due in court next month.

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Workers have the power to stop the jobs massacre

by DAVE SEWELL

PROPOSED CUTS by Tata Steel and news that Caparo Industries have gone into administration has put 2,900 steel jobs at risk.

The number of workers thrown on the scrapheap could be much higher as the shockwaves devastate the steel works' supply chains and local economies.

These fresh blows come straight after the devastating closure of the SSI steel works in Redcar. They threaten to finish off a workforce that has been under attack for decades.

The greed of bosses who were happy to take profits in the good times, then put the cost of their crisis onto workers, is appalling.

So is the failure to act. David Cameron has hidden behind European Union rules to say his government is "doing everything we can"—while doing nothing.

Unite union assistant general secretary Tony Burke warned, "Failure to act urgently could lead to a 'domino effect' taking hold."

TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady said, "At this rate there won't be a British steel industry in a year's time."

But the inaction is theirs too.

Mourning

In Redcar the leaders of the labour movement passed too quickly from anger to mourning.

Workers had some help saving for Christmas presents and applying for new work. But they were offered no hope for a fightback to keep their jobs.

Burke was already talking about the Tata job cuts as if they were a done deal on Monday of this week.

That was before they were even formally announced on Tuesday.

Union and Labour officials have set their sights no higher than lobbying



STEEL WORKERS are campaigning to stop job cuts (above) but need union leaders to lead a real fight. Workers would win solidarity from supporters who have visited plants (left) if they took action to defend jobs

the government for import controls on Chinese steel. That will not save jobs.

Union leaders, shadow chancellor John McDonnell and the TUC have the same demand—stop the "dumping" of Chinese steel at low prices to save jobs.

Import controls have long been a demand of the Labour left—and

never an effective one.

As far as the markets are concerned "excess capacity" in global steel production needs to be cut back. Import controls don't change this.

At most they can spare workers in one country at the expense of those in another.

This competition on national lines puts workers in a race to the bottom

that only the bosses can win.

It's how Vauxhall got Unite to sign up to attacks on workers in Ellesmere Port in 2012—when workers in Germany were laid off instead of them.

No amount of protectionism will make Britain a more profitable place for bosses to invest in than China.

Steel manufacturing has uses beyond bosses' profits. It could be nationalised and run as a public service.

Pressure

The focus on China takes the heat off the British government, which should be put under constant pressure to do this.

Workers need their unions to lead a fight over jobs. The main steel unions—Unite, Community, GMB and Ucat—could book hundreds of coaches for a mass demonstration.

The tens of thousands of people directly affected by the cuts, and everyone who supports them, could be called on to march on Whitehall.

And workers could hit hardest in the workplace.

When faced with the threat of closure in 2009, workers at Ford Visteon refused to leave. No one saw their occupation coming.

Visteon workers forced major concessions from one of the world's biggest companies. If steel workers took hold of a furnace and occupied the plant it would put them in control.

Such a struggle could galvanise huge public support—and force the government to nationalise the industry.

There's no guarantee that resistance would win. But steel workers deserve better than being written off without a fight.

What's your story?

Email with your ideas
reports@socialistworker.co.uk

Steel worker says, 'Fight to save jobs'



>>>continued from page 1

unions. We'll need more of that solidarity when we're campaigning this Saturday, and when we march on North Lincolnshire council on Tuesday 10 November.

But we need a nationwide fight. All the steel unions should build a national demonstration in London

FIGURE IT OUT

1,200 steel workers' jobs cut in Scunthorpe and Lanarkshire this week

2,200 steel workers' jobs slashed in Redcar earlier this month

1,700 steel workers employed by Caparo Industries—which has called in administrators

for a start.

And they mustn't take their eyes off campaigning for the state funding that is the only way to save steel jobs.

Low prices mean steel isn't profitable for the bosses at the moment, but it's needed for building homes, railways and windfarms.

It should be bailed out—like the banks were. It should be nationalised—as it has been in Italy.

We're in the last chance saloon. We can't afford not to fight.

Send messages of support to ian.davies0788@gmail.com
Join steel workers petitioning at 10.30am on Saturday 24 October, outside Primark in Scunthorpe town centre.

IN BRIEF

Recorded child sex crimes rise

HOME OFFICE figures show that recorded child sex crimes rose by 46 percent in the 12 months to June.

Some 35,152 such crimes were recorded across England and Wales.

High-profile abuse scandals mean victims may be more confident to come forward.

Crush account was 'amended'

A POLICE constable on duty during the Hillsborough disaster has said his account of the day was changed.

Inquests into the deaths of 96 fans who died due to the disaster continue.

More at socialistworker.co.uk

New probe into corrupt cops

THE NATIONAL Crime Agency (NCA) is investigating allegations that corrupt officers ruined the first inquiry into Stephen Lawrence's murder.

Stephen was knifed to death in 1993 aged 18 by white youths in Eltham, South East London.

Students win a rent rebate

STUDENTS ON rent strike at University College London have won a full term rent rebate worth £100,000 in total. It's compensation for their "unacceptable" accommodation.

University bosses had threatened disciplinary action against the Campbell House West students.

ON THE WEB

Top five hits this week on
www.socialistworker.co.uk

- 1 **Mass protest of junior doctors in London as revolt against new contracts grows**
- 2 **Bombs will worsen the situation for Syria—Western or Russian**
- 3 **Exclusive—'Who will protect us from police?' ask Yemeni family**
- 4 **Suffragette—the revolt that won the vote**
- 5 **The time is ripe for a 'Third Intifada'**



A Unite the Resistance pamphlet by Sean Vernell. Foreword by shadow chancellor John McDonnell £1. Go to uniteresist.org



Angry refugees lead a march in Calais and celebrate solidarity

by DAVE SEWELL in Calais

REFUGEES AND anti-racist activists joined forces at Britain's border in Calais last Saturday.

More than 1,000 people marched from the “jungle” camp to the terminal of the port chanting, “Refugees welcome” and “Open the border”.

It was part of a solidarity trip organised by Stand Up to Racism (SUTR). Activists across Britain had raised money in their workplaces, schools and communities for refugees trapped in Calais.

Staff and students at Urswick school in Hackney, east London, had filled the school minibus with supplies.

Teacher Richard Aubray told Socialist Worker, “It’s what they talk about in the playground now. They say, ‘We’re helping, so why isn’t the government?’”

Some 35 people came on the Manchester delegation.

Social worker Vernetta had raised £160 in her workplace. She said, “A lot of people were really generous. ‘Others ask how you can afford to help refugees when there’s cuts and homelessness in Britain.’

“I explained it’s all part of the same problem—the Tories are trying to divide us. Those discussions are important and this has been an opportunity to have them.”

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn came to support the convoy as the delegation from his north London Islington constituency set off.

For many members of the Turkish and Kurdish group DayMer there is a personal dimension to the refugee crisis.

Smuggled

Health worker Alan Sahin explained, “My mother came from Syria as a refugee, and since the war started my uncles have been getting smuggled out too.

“One has diabetes—when we lost contact we thought he’d died without his insulin. Another didn’t see his wife and children for over a year.”

BACK STORY

Around 6,000 refugees are living in the “jungle” in the French port of Calais

● Many have undergone dangerous journeys to escape war and repression

● David Cameron is refusing to let them come to Britain

● But their plight has led to an outpouring of support and solidarity from ordinary people

● Supporters marched with refugees in Calais last Saturday demanding the border is opened

The trip also included a nationwide mobilisation by the Social Work Action Network, and a small group of supporters from Paris.

SUTR hosted a rally where many refugees spoke powerfully about their experiences.

Activists were horrified by the conditions at the jungle (see right). They saw the new distribution centre charities have set up to deal with the flood of support.

The refugees are organised and angry. They led the march holding the SUTR banner. Some threw gravel at the cops guarding the border, shouting, “We are not animals.”

When protesters rallied on a nearby roundabout it felt like a celebration.

Kurdish refugees led a Dabke dance, and musician Natty performed from the back of a lorry.

Weyman Bennett from SUTR argued that only letting them settle in Britain could end their ordeal.

He told the rally, “The jungle is not a place for human beings, and winter is coming.

“We’re here to challenge the border. We say everyone here is welcome in Britain.”

On other pages...

The truth behind the bombing of an Afghan hospital >>>Page 8



REFUGEES LEADING the protest march in Calais last Saturday

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

‘Stop people dying—open the border’

A RAINY autumn has turned dusty streets in the Calais jungle into a mire of deep mud.

The stench of over-stretched chemical toilets hangs in the air.

Tents are packed in more densely as the French authorities estimate the jungle’s population has almost doubled to 6,000.

Mohammed Abdelbadi from Darfur in Sudan told Socialist Worker, “If I hadn’t left Sudan I would have died, and if I stay in the jungle over winter I will die.

“We came to Europe to find the land of human rights. Instead the French government leaves us in the jungle—even people who apply for asylum in France.

“If we could get a roof here we would stay here. But there’s no solution here.”

This hell is also home to children and many people with severe health conditions.

Najim—one of around 300 Bedouins in the jungle fleeing persecution in Kuwait—lives in there with four of his children



VOICES

and his severely diabetic wife. He hopes to be reunited with the rest of the family in Britain.

The jungle has grown as cops clear out squats as far away as Dunkirk to contain people in one generalised dumping ground.

Higher fences and more cops make it harder to leave.

David Cameron claims this will deter people from risking their lives. Refugees say it only makes the attempts more dangerous.

Sadaran Assani from Afghanistan marched in clothes torn from nightly attempts to scale the four-metre-high razor wire fence sent by the Tories.

He has seen people die trying

to get out. “The border is too strong,” he said.

Two people died trying to escape Calais last week—bringing the total this year to 19.

A Syrian woman was run over on the motorway in front of her son, and an Afghan teenager hit by a train.

Kozhin from Iraqi Kurdistan said, “Every night police catch us, wherever we go they try to stop us.

“That’s why people are dying. To stop people dying they must open the border.”

Kozhin has crossed seven countries in the hope of being reunited in Britain with the brother he last saw eight years ago. Like others who have made dangerous journeys, he isn’t about to be turned back.

Ahmad Khalid from Afghanistan said, “It’s almost impossible to get across. But I will keep trying. What choice do I have? I can’t go back.

“I’m marching in the hope Britain will open its borders.”

IN BRIEF

Protests grow across Europe as governments clamp down

MORE refugees died trying to enter Europe last week.

Bulgarian border guards shot dead a young man from Afghanistan. And at least three adults and four children were killed near the Greek island of Lesbos when a Greek coast guard vessel collided with their dinghy.

But there is resistance too.

Giorgos Pittas is a journalist from Socialist Worker’s sister paper Workers’ Solidarity.

He reported, “The Nazi party Golden Dawn has tried to organise in the islands where refugees are arriving.

“So it’s significant that there were ‘anti-fascist protests there last week.’

Trade union branches in Lesbos’



Protesters in Calais

PICTURE: JOSH BROWN

capital Mytilini mobilised to stop Golden Dawn holding an open meeting.

A march of thousands on the European Union (EU) offices called for the border to be opened.

Hungary’s government sealed its border with Croatia last Saturday. Croatian activists

Ankica Cakardic and Mislav Stubic told Socialist Worker, “Croatia has become the main hub for refugees entering Europe.

“The government is scrambling to secure basic necessities. Many of the refugees left home in summer and are still in their summer clothes.”

Pregnant refugee secretly removed to Pacific island

A PREGNANT Somali refugee was secretly flown back by the Australian government to the offshore detention centre where she was raped.

Immigration officials seized “Abyan” in a desperate effort to avoid court action that could’ve stopped her being removed to the Pacific island of Nauru.

“Abyan requested

of her pregnancy.

“There has been no counselling and no arrangements to see counsellors or doctors,” the Refugee Action Coalition said.

It also said claims by immigration minister Peter Dutton that she decided not to have an abortion were untrue.

Abyan is still waiting for the medical attention she needs.

Peter Dutton

to see counsellors and to get advice from doctors to discuss the planned termination

Blockade disrupts Eurostar

THE TRIP to Calais wasn’t the only protest for refugees last week.

Hundreds joined a Refugees Welcome Here protest in Dover last Saturday in solidarity with the Calais convoy.

The previous night around 100 protesters blockaded the Eurostar passenger terminal in London St Pancras demanding open borders. They disrupted services for more than an hour.

FIGURE IT OUT

50 vehicles including cars and coaches joined the Stand Up to Racism convoy to Calais

500 people from all over Britain joined the convoy including workers, students and campaigners

£15,000

was raised for refugee charities plus supplies such as tents, blankets, boots and clothes

Socialist Worker WHAT WE THINK

WITCH HUNT OF MUSLIMS IS POISONING SOCIETY

THE NEW “Counter Extremism Strategy” from David Cameron and Theresa May breaks new ground in the drive to portray Muslims as the enemy. The foul document is littered with both explicit and underhand references to make people see all Muslims as a threat.

The Tories have redefined what they deem “extremism”. Now the label applies to anyone expressing “vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values.”

Non-violence isn’t enough. The document says, “Extremists who are careful to avoid directly supporting violence, nevertheless create an environment in which division and hatred is propagated.”

The Tories claim they are against all extremists. The new policies refer to also targeting far right and fascist groups.

But the Tories’ Islamophobia feeds the far right and legitimises their racism. The document reports that racist attacks on Muslims in London have gone up by 70 percent.

Cameron and May have given up any pretence at trying not to generalise about Muslims.

They mention Lutfur Rahman,

the left wing former mayor of Tower Hamlets in east London, in the same passage as child sexual exploitation in Rotherham.

It is no accident that they compare the strategy to that used to confront child abuse. They want to create links in people’s minds.

And they constantly refer to the danger of Isis.

The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) rightly said the proposals have “McCarthyist undertones”, referencing the 1950s US anti-Communist witch hunts.

Cameron and May say they will “shut down” mosques where “extremist” meetings are held. The MCB asked, “Do such mosques really exist and by

“It’s no accident that the Tories compare ‘extremism’ to child abuse

whose definition are they deemed to be extremist?”

In an Orwellian move the Tories pledged to train and support “a network of credible commentators” to fill the internet with “mainstream content.”

More significantly every public body—including charities, local government, NHS, schools and universities—will be examined for risks of “entryism” by extremists.

That the Tories dare launch such a vile document shows how far the politicians have come in making Islamophobia mainstream.

It is therefore an urgent wake up call for every activist. We must resist the Tories’ racist rampage.

The strategy is about dividing us—and destroying working class unity with corrosive racism. When workers are divided it is harder for us to win.

They want us to blame Muslims for everything that’s wrong in the world, including the rise of Isis.

But Isis is a product of imperialist war, not religion. So we need to resist more bombing that will make the situation worse.

And we need to build Stand Up to Racism everywhere, to bring together the widest opposition to attacks on migrants and Muslims.

TORIES DREAM OF CHINA

THE TABLOIDS marked the visit to Britain of Chinese president Xi Jinping with racist jokes. But David Cameron was declaring a new “golden age” as he rolled out the red carpet.

The fanfare is a bid for multibillion pound business deals.

The supposedly cash-strapped George Osborne stumped up £2 billion to broker Chinese investment into the Hinkley Point nuclear power station.

The Tories claim that Chinese investors buying up stakes in

British firms show the economy has recovered through austerity.

It’s really a sign of British capitalism’s weakness.

Manufacturing—particularly heavy industry—has been in relative decline here for decades.

Britain was falling behind rivals such as Germany and Japan as its rulers struggled to cope with no longer having an empire.

Margaret Thatcher hoped to clear out the less profitable sectors of the economy—and many thousands of workers with

them. But the more financialised economy she built crashed in 2008. Today’s Tories are still trying to find a way out.

None of this means workers don’t have power, whether in manufacturing or in other sectors.

It does mean the promised Tory golden age isn’t coming.

Bosses will only attract investors by squeezing more out of workers for less—attacking wages, conditions and unions.

And workers will only get a better deal by taking them on.

Get organised against racism

TORY propaganda against refugees is failing to convince many people.

Islington Labour councillor Michelline Ngongo told Socialist Worker, “Lots of people want to support the refugees.

“People think the government’s response has been shameful.”

London South



Michelline Ngongo

Bank University student Sammy Hillyer is helping to launch a campaign called Lesbians and Gays Support the Migrants. He said, “As a gay person you often hear things like, ‘Do you really want them coming over here from those homophobic countries?’ We want to take on that racism.”

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ANALYSIS

ALEX CALLINICOS



Kurds trapped by imperial schemes

THE ANKARA bombings underlined that the troubled relationship between the Kurds and the Turkish state is close to the heart of the rapidly deteriorating crisis in the Middle East.

The Kurds were one of the main losers in the imperialist carve-up of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the First World War. They were denied the right to self-determination and distributed between Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey.

The significance of the Kurds in Turkey is partly a consequence of their social weight. The CIA World Factbook estimates them at 18 percent of the population, with between two and four million living in Istanbul.

But it is also the result of the stubborn armed struggle waged since the mid-1980s by the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) in southeast Anatolia, where the Kurds have traditionally been concentrated.

After the victory of the Islamist AKP under Recep Tayyip Erdogan in 2003 the Turkish government and the PKK were for a long time inching, painfully slowly, towards a peace deal. Under this Kurdistan would get a degree of autonomy and Kurdish language and culture would no longer be persecuted.

In the last year or so, the peace process has been in increasing trouble, for two reasons. First of all, the regime of Bashar al-Assad abandoned the Kurdish areas over the border in Syria and the PKK's Syrian affiliate took control of them. Assad probably intended to cause problems for Erdogan, who might want to come to terms with the PKK but not at the price of seeing its influence spread.

Secondly, the PKK-aligned Democratic People's Party (HDP) won 13.12 percent of the vote in the Turkish general election last June. This was enough to deny the AKP a parliamentary majority.

Worse still from Erdogan's point of view, the result prevents the AKP from changing the constitution to give the presidency—which he now occupies—executive powers.

The result is increasing antagonism between the Turkish state and the Kurdish people. The ceasefire between the army and the PKK has broken down, and in re-run parliamentary elections Erdogan is beating the drum of Turkish nationalism.

This is terrible news for the Kurds, but it's also complicating life for the Western imperialist powers.

In the first place, there's a divergence in aims over Syria. Erdogan, like the rulers of Saudi Arabia and Qatar, is going all out to overthrow Assad, in the process advising and funding various jihadi groups in Syria.

Effective

The US still says it wants to get rid of Assad, but is more worried about Isis. The Kurdish fighters in Syria have proved to be the most effective military ally the US has found against Isis. So when Turkey's warplanes started targeting them in the summer, its Western Nato allies complained.

The European refugee crisis is another complicating factor. Turkey's application for membership of the European Union had been dead in the water for years. Ostensibly this was because of Erdogan's recent authoritarian turn.

The real reason was racist opposition in member states such as France, Germany, and Austria to 80 million Muslims becoming EU citizens.

Now Turkey has received over two million Syrian refugees. The EU leaders hope that Erdogan can stem the flow via Turkey into Europe. But he's made it clear that this won't come cheap.

A summit last week promised an EU "action plan"—a £2.2 billion subsidy, visa-free travel in Europe for Turkish citizens, and a revival of talks on Turkey's accession to the EU. One official said, "I have never seen the EU so forthcoming to Turkey, never... It is like Santa Claus has arrived."

The Financial Times reported that Brussels has suppressed a report criticising Erdogan's human rights record until after the elections in November.

The irony is that the EU shunned Turkey when Erdogan was at his most liberal. It is now falling over itself to appease him when he seems hellbent on reviving the war with the Kurdish people. As they were a century ago, the Kurds look like being the victims of manoeuvres between the imperialist powers and the local ruling classes.

Mass action needed to beat the Tories' Trade Union Bill

by RAYMIE KIERNAN

THE TORIES' intention to ram their Trade Union Bill through parliament was clear last week as the bill reached committee stage.

A committee of MPs took evidence from witnesses. But government consultations on the bill that closed over a month ago are yet to be published.

With a Tory majority the bill is being fast-tracked. This is about boosting the anti-union laws to further curb the right to strike and undermine industrial action.

Mobilisations against it now, before it is passed, can shape the resistance that can defy the law.

During the committee sessions no Tory MP missed the opportunity to push lies about "intimidation" on picket lines, or "blockades" as they were often referred to.

They cited unsubstantiated assertions from the discredited Carr Review. The review was into accusations of intimidation during the 2013 Grangemouth dispute.

Appeal

Some union leaders think they can appeal to the better nature of certain Tory MPs and want the TUC mobilisation at parliament on 2 November to simply lobby them.

This would throw away an opportunity to build a militant mobilisation.

But others have different ideas. Salford City Unison union treasurer Ameen Hadi spoke to Socialist Worker in a personal capacity. He said, "We want to see a mass rally outside parliament and make ourselves heard."

"We've had a lot of interest from branch members about travelling to London. There are 22 of us going so far. We are going to protest, not just lobby MPs."

Ameen said that Greater Manchester TUC has also called a local protest against the bill on 6 November. Other areas should do the same. "We're saying no to pay cuts,



A PROTEST against victimisation at Grangemouth

PICTURE: UNITE THE RESISTANCE

defend the right to strike, kill the bill," he said.

"This is an attack on all of us, not just trade unionists—the Tories want to make it easier to destroy the welfare state."

There is a mood to resist. More than 150 attended a Midlands TUC and Nottingham People's Assembly meeting against the Bill on Thursday of last week in Nottingham.

Over 200 joined a rally at parliament last week, organised by the Trade Union Coordinating Group.

PCS union general secretary Mark Serwotka argued for mass action.

"We need to make 2 November a massive event," he said. "Organise protests in constituencies. People are never going to need their union like they will soon."

But he also argued that trade unionists using their right to strike is key to beating the Tories.

He said, "We can't just wait until the bill becomes law and be on the defensive. The Tories are depending on that happening."

"They've thrown down the gauntlet—we need effective industrial action now."

Unite the Resistance national conference

Fight austerity, Defend our unions

Saturday 14 November, 11am-5pm

Bloomsbury Baptist Church, 235 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2H 8EP

Speakers include:

John McDonnell MP shadow chancellor

Natalie Bennett Green Party leader

Candy Udwin victimised PCS National Gallery striker

Matt Wrack FBU general secretary

Steve Gillan POA general secretary

Keith Ewing Institute of Employment Rights president

John Hendy employment rights barrister

Ian Hodson BFAWU national president

Paula Peters DPAC Kevin Courtney NUT deputy general secretary

Plenaries

- The fight against austerity and the Trade Union Bill
- Where now after Corbyn's election?

Workshops

- Benefit justice: can we stop Cameron's war on the poor?
- Organising the unorganised: the US and British experience
- NHS under attack: the assault on unsocial hours and the defence of our health service
- Don't let them divide us: Refugees welcome here/defending migrant workers/ combatting the Prevent agenda
- How to win a strike

Book now:

£8 waged, £3 unwaged
Register online at uniteresist.org

KILL THE BILL

Monday 2 November

- Join the mass TUC lobby of parliament. Assemble 1pm at Westminster Central Hall, Storey's Gate, London SW1H 9NH
- Protest at 6pm in Parliament Square. Called by the Trade Union Coordinating Group
- Organise local protests in your workplace, town or city in solidarity with the TUC lobby

Cuts councils clash with new Labour supporters

by NICK CLARK

LABOUR LEADER Jeremy Corbyn's supporters plan to build on the success of his election campaign. But they face challenges inside the party as well as outside.

More than 180,000 people have joined Labour since Corbyn won the leadership election in September.

Many had never been in a political party before. Others are people who had left Labour in the past and decided to rejoin.

Gill Kennard is an independent councillor in Hull. She was a Labour councillor until she left the party last year, having been suspended for refusing to vote through cuts.

Gill told Socialist Worker, "I'm so pleased that Jeremy Corbyn has been elected Labour leader.

"The man is saying everything that we are saying. I want to put my energy behind Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell, and I've applied to rejoin the Labour Party."

That tension is also apparent in Constituency Labour Party (CLP) meetings.

Grassroots

Amarjite Singh is CWU union South Wales Amalgamated branch secretary. He told Socialist Worker, "The party now has a grassroots again. Many CLP meetings have been big because of new members.

"I think most CLPs have been welcoming, but some have been more negative because the new members support Jeremy.

"Those in the party who wanted to take us to the right are bitter, but not everyone can win in politics."

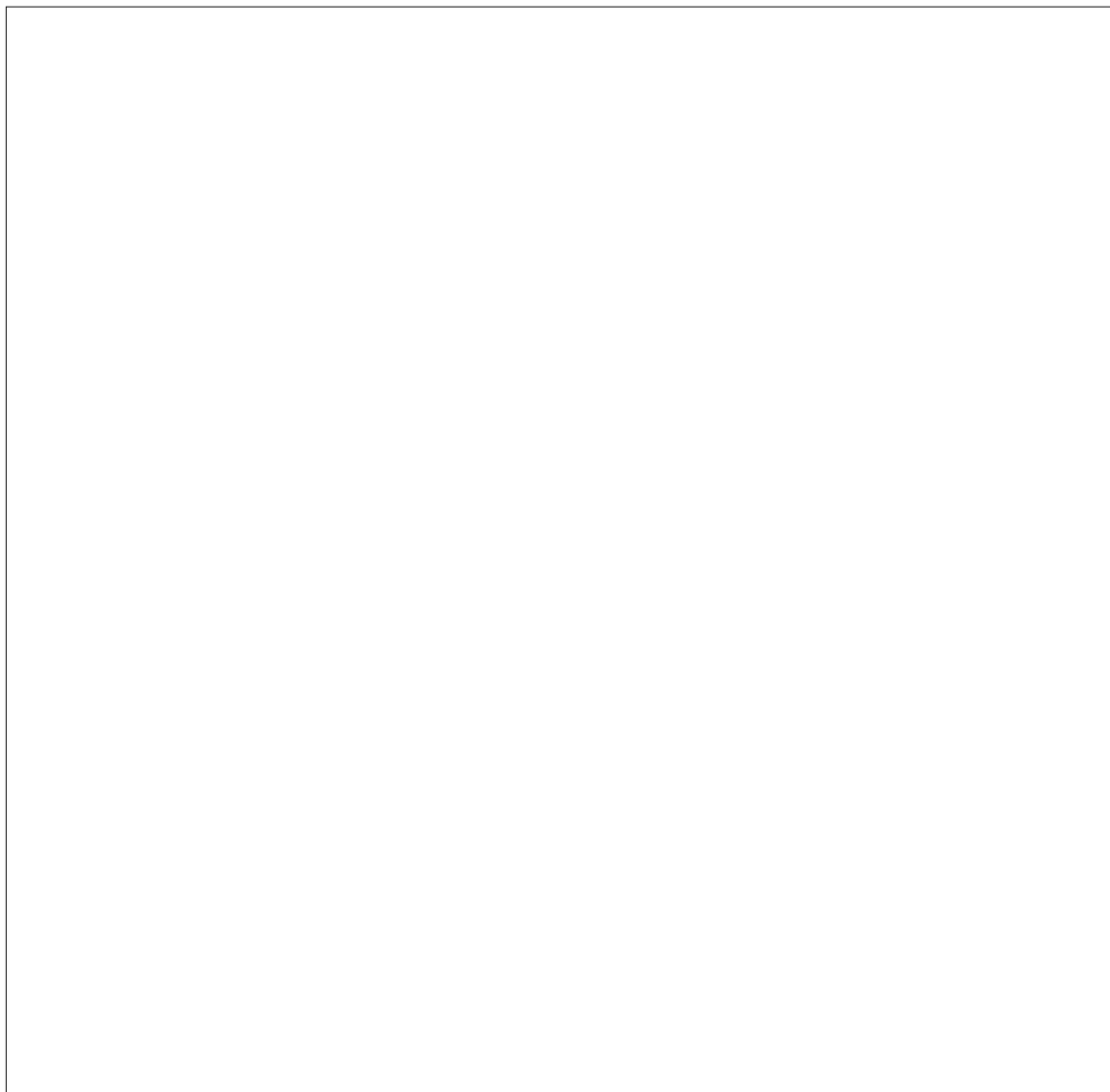
Lambeth council in south London is out to close half the libraries in the borough. But local campaigns say it's vital to keep them open—and new Labour members agree.

Tim O'Dell, the Unison union shop steward for libraries in Lambeth, was invited to a local meeting. He described the clash between the councillors and the new members.

He said, "It became very clear that the Labour Party is not in sync with the people who joined because of Jeremy Corbyn."

The meeting managed to pass a motion opposing the closures—but not without opposition. With billions more council cuts to come across Britain, this faultline will only deepen.

Some Corbyn supporters have set up a group called



LABOUR LEADER Jeremy Corbyn has inspired people to join the party—and oppose cuts

Momentum, which aims to build on the strengths of his election campaign.

It has organised a day of action to sign people up to the electoral register on Saturday of this week.

Gill has joined Momentum in Hull. She said, "I like to think it will give people confidence to speak and help support people. But it will be what we make it.

"People can use it as a tool to enable people, and to help people understand what socialism is.

"It doesn't want to be just a talking shop where people just go on and on.

It can be practical and get the socialist voice out there."



Labour and CWU union activist Amarjite Singh

Unity, but not with the left

MOMENTUM HAS come under attack from some on the right.

Labour MP Mary Creagh said the group could lead to purges and "factionalism and infighting". Former home secretary David Blunkett warned it not to be a "party within a party".

Tensions inside Labour mean there is always infighting.

The right has groups such as Progress and Labour First. But Momentum is accused of opening up Labour to "infiltration" by socialists.

Momentum's website says it will "work with everyone who supports Jeremy's aim of creating a more fair, equal and democratic society".

Some right wingers used Socialist Worker's article calling on socialists to support

Momentum to claim that the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) was trying to enter Labour.

The SWP said members should openly go to Momentum meetings and propose joint activity.

Socialist Worker does not think people should join Labour. But the SWP has always worked alongside Labour members in many campaigns and trade unions.

Corbyn supporters are under pressure to maintain unity with right wingers.

So instead of defending Momentum, spokespeople said they are unwilling to work with other socialist groups.

The accusations were an attempt to smear those in Labour who genuinely want to build a broad-based movement.

ABORTION

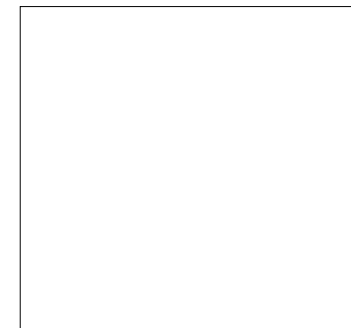
Bigots want devolution to make new attacks

ABORTION LAW is to be devolved to the Scottish parliament, the secretary of state for Scotland and Tory MP David Mundell announced on Wednesday of last week.

Abortion rights activists want to ensure this change means the maintenance and extension of abortion rights, and not any further restrictions.

Some anti-abortion campaigners see this as an opportunity to push for increased limits on women's rights.

These bigots have been the



Protesting for abortion rights

most vocal about demanding devolution of abortion law.

But polls show that over 75 percent of Scots support a woman's right to choose and don't want more limits imposed.

The Abortion Rights (AR) campaign pointed out that women in Scotland already have to travel to England to access an abortion after 18 weeks.

In a statement AR said this situation was "unacceptable, and we look forward to the Scottish Government taking urgent action to resource services directly provided through NHS Scotland, in Scotland."

Judith Orr

MARXISM
in Scotland 2015
Another World Is Necessary
A day of political debate, analysis and discussion hosted by Socialist Workers Party
Saturday 31 October, 10am-5pm
Renfield St Stephen's, 260 Bath Street, Glasgow G2 4JP
More details
web: on.fb.me/1Y2wZ4K
email: swpscotland@gmail.com

Don't whip over Syria

I CAN understand the call for Jeremy Corbyn to whip his MPs to vote against any military intervention in Syria (Socialist Worker, 17 October).

But this would only give his opponents within Labour something to attack their leader about.

It would be better to point out to those Labour MPs how incompetent Cameron is when it comes to military matters.

Cameron made the same mistakes in Libya in 2011 that Tony Blair made in Iraq in 2003.

With the Russian air force flying over Syria any mistake made by our prime minister would be very serious.

David Aitcheson
Dudley

Do robots take jobs?

STEPHEN HAWKING ran an online Q&A session earlier this month. He was asked about the threat that machines pose to employment. This is how he answered.

"If machines produce everything we need, the outcome will depend on how things are distributed.

"Everyone can enjoy a life of luxurious leisure if the machine-produced wealth is shared, or most people can end up miserably poor if the machine-owners successfully lobby against wealth redistribution.

"So far, the trend seems to be toward the second option, with technology driving ever-increasing inequality."

Graham Hodgkin
West London

News boss's big bonus shows the need to fight

MASSIVE PAY rises for bosses at one of the biggest media groups shows why journalists need to fight over pay.

Many Newsquest journalists are paid less than the Living Wage. Yet its latest accounts show it made £60 million before tax while saving £5 million by sacking 228 staff.

Chief executive Henry Faure Walker's base pay was £401,505. But the accounts show a rise in



ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

The Israeli ambassador is not welcome in Birmingham

LAST WEEK we found out at short notice that the Israeli ambassador Eitan Na'eh was coming to visit Birmingham.

West Midlands Palestine Solidarity Campaign quickly organised protests.

Part of the ambassador's trip involved a secret visit to Camp Hill School for Girls.

When the students there heard their visitor was the Israeli ambassador some walked out while others stayed to challenge him.

Now some of the students have written an open letter condemning the visit.

The letter says, "On a week where we heard of an Israeli air strike killing a pregnant woman

and her child, when Netanyahu has authorised the sealing-off of Palestinian areas of Jerusalem, to host an Israeli Ambassador is nothing less than the endorsement of a state that is currently undertaking what the United Nations has described as war crimes.

"How can we meaningfully support education for all whilst hosting a representative of a state that bombs UN schools in Gaza? A state that bombs Gaza's university?"

"It is a gross insult to the 94 percent of schools in Gaza that are forced to operate on a 'double shift' system, to the students who are being denied a quality education as a direct result of the

Israeli occupation and blockade.

"If the school wanted to introduce us to a potential career of a diplomat, it could have hosted a diplomat of a country that isn't illegally occupying another.

"It could have hosted a diplomat whose state does not encourage voting against recognising the statehood of another country.

"We demand a formal explanation from the school as to why this happened."

As Israel tries to crush Palestinian resistance, we need to organise however we can to show our support.

Mirfat Sulaiman
Birmingham

Read the students' full statement at: on.fb.me/1X8XuEg

Call for solidarity for refugees

THIS GOVERNMENT and the media have done their utmost to dehumanise refugees.

The 100,000 people who demonstrated in Manchester at the Conservative Party conference shows that unity is alive and growing against austerity and racism.

We call on anti-racists, trade unionists, politicians,



Manchester Stand up to Racism

PICTURE: LEWIS NIELSEN

academics, students, youth, faith, refugee and community groups to support the convoys taking much-needed items to Calais.

Take part in local

activities welcoming migrants and refugees to our cities and towns.

Rhetta Moran and other signatories
Stand up to Racism Greater Manchester

Just a thought...

Our pub won't serve Nazis

WHILE ON my break at the Wetherspoons I work in the organiser of the EDL's anti-immigration march told me they wanted to start the march in our pub.

As soon as this fascist left my sight I started contacting fellow employees. We all agreed that we could not let this happen and went to our manager.

Within 24 hours management ordered our pub in Scarborough to shut for the entirety of the march, refusing to provide for these bigots.

Kirsty Lincoln
Scarborough

You're wrong about Labour

IT DOESN'T have to be an either or dichotomy between working in parliament and organising outside (Socialist Worker, 17 October). The establishment will do their best to exert pressure on Jeremy Corbyn. But pressure can be resisted.

I'm sure Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell are highly aware of the movement outside parliament.

Richard Banker
Derby

Don't bully the poor MPs

SOME 21 Labour MPs abstained in the vote on George Osborne's charter last week.

Now they're complaining that people are having a go at them on Twitter.

My heart goes out to them.

Anita Sefton
Leeds

Politics of the pigsty

I SAW the front cover parodying David Cameron with a pig's snout (Socialist Worker, 3 October).

I wish Socialist Worker was following Jeremy Corbyn's dignified example, firmly challenging the issues without getting personal.

Cameron's youthful experimentation would surely be accepted and tolerated in someone less nasty. Should anyone be pilloried for their sexual preferences?

Name provided
Birmingham

Glasgow’s iconic Red Road flats came down last week. The aim wasn’t simply to demolish buildings, but to help destroy the idea that the state should provide housing, writes Gerry Mooney

THE BOTCHED demolition of the Red Road flats in Glasgow last week was more than just a TV news spectacle. The residential tower blocks had dominated part of the city’s skyline for decades.

The “iconic” flats have appeared in numerous films, television dramas and documentaries.

Scottish Television’s Taggart police detective series and the 2006 film Red Road dealt with the darker side of Red Road life.

In 2007 French high wire artist Didier Pasquette undertook a high wire stunt between two of the tower blocks. He was defeated in the end by “Glasgow weather”.

Few council estates have had such attention as the Red Road flats have had. But more than that, they symbolised a history of struggle by working class people for decent, affordable housing.

It is 100 years since 30,000 tenants in Glasgow engaged in a rent strike against racketeering private landlords (see right). Their struggle played a key role in eventually forcing the state into the direct provision of what became known as council housing.

The city embarked on the largest programme of council housing development in Europe in the post-1945 era. But by the 1960s too many people still lived in overcrowded and inadequate housing.

The Red Road flats, and other council housing estates across the city, emerged from this housing crisis.

Thousands of working class Glaswegians eagerly sought the 4,800 houses at the Red Road. These people were often living in poor quality tenement housing, often unfit for human habitation.

The flats were viewed as the pinnacle of the council’s post-war housing efforts when first built. They represented a vision of a new future, a modern and vibrant Glasgow.

But for much of the last three decades the Red Road became “notorious” as a place of poverty, deprivation, anti-social behaviour and poor quality housing. It became a catch-all term for the worst of mass high rise housing construction.

We are constantly told that blocks



Some saw demolition as long overdue. Others a sign of neglect by governments

such as the Red Road had to be demolished given their poor quality.

It might seem common sense to support the scrapping of such housing.

But socialists recognise that there was no inevitability about the decline in the homes’ quality. Slum housing does not emerge by accident.

Purposeful and long term lack of investment and lack of maintenance help to run down council estates. Failure to provide adequate social facilities, and long term disinvestment in working class areas, play a significant role too.

At the Red Road little thought was given to the provision of social amenities—areas for children to play, shopping facilities and so on. And this was true of countless other housing developments across Britain at the time.

So there were mixed emotions as the flats were levelled last week. Thousands of people turned up to witness the final chapter in the Red Road story. There was a strong sense of attachment and belonging to the Red Road from those watching and those who were among the first to be housed there.

Neglect

Some saw the demolition as long overdue. Others criticised the neglect of the Red Road and the people who lived there by successive local and national governments.

Many rightly blamed the lack of maintenance and the failures of the council to invest in the area for its demise.

Today the city council is in a sense “celebrating” the centenary of the 1915 Rent Strike by demolishing housing. This housing could have been refurbished to meet urgent need.

The Red Road demolition is represented as an exercise in “redevelopment” or “regeneration”.

The idea is that this is about eradicating hard to let, dilapidated housing and replacing it with newer, more modern housing. And that goes for the demolition of council and other housing estates across Britain.

But there is another much more significant dimension to all this.

Opponents of council housing have fought to make it a marker of personal failure. Tenants were seen almost as second class citizens.

Meanwhile “social housing” became an umbrella term. It encompasses housing for rent by a range of “social providers”—councils, housing associations, housing agencies, and so on.

This is part of a much more ideological shift.

It is part of a wider challenge to the idea that the state should play a role in the direct provision of affordable housing to rent.

Council housing was mass housing for the working class. Social housing came to be regarded as a much more residual form of housing, effectively

DEMOLITION JOB



THE GLASGOW Rent Strike of 1915 involved as many as 20,000 tenants and eventually forced the state into providing housing

only for poorer sections of society.

The idea that the state should provide housing “for all” has, like other areas of state provision, come under sustained attack.

Razing council and social housing to the ground today is not simply an exercise in physical demolition.

It is bulldozing the idea that the state should have a role to play in housing.

The dominant ideology is that private purchase or private renting should cater for all but the most disadvantaged.

There are other dimensions at play. Private developers and companies clear out working class populations seen to be in the way of new luxury developments or land grabs.

Attacks on council housing are also attacks on the tenants as in some way

failed. Tenants are seen as needing to be controlled.

The Red Road was portrayed as a place without ‘community’. Yet plenty of evidence points to a strongly shared collective experience in the face of huge odds, of struggles to make ends meet.

Council housing tenants continue to be stigmatised. Socialists should point to the successive periods of disinvestment and the deliberate running down of working class estates.

The decline in the social and economic fabric of many working class communities did not result from tenants’ alleged disruptive or dysfunctional behaviour or lifestyles.

It is part and parcel of longer term processes of economic and industrial decline mirrored across Britain. Long

term cuts in services and social provision also contribute.

Attacking state provision accompanies attacks on social welfare more generally. The Red Road flats are seen as symbolic of another era—a place that time has in some ways forgot, or should forget.

In contrast to such hostile views there have been struggles for decent affordable housing, as we have seen in east London over the past few years.

That should encourage us in the fight to prevent the dismissal of state housing as a mere episode in history.

Investment in state provided housing is the only way to meet the needs of the many millions for whom good quality, affordable housing remains just a dream.

We should learn from the 1915 Rent Strike’s militancy

THE FIRST World War saw a number of rent strikes break out across Britain. But the 1915 Glasgow Rent Strike stands out, in no small part due to the context of Clydeside at that time.

Glasgow was an industrial powerhouse of the British Empire and an important producer of armaments. The city had grown enormously during the Victorian era and the needs of war industries led to further migration to the city.

In early 1915 landlords took advantage of this rising population and acute overcrowding to increase rents by up to 25 percent.

Their virtual monopoly of working class housing put them in a powerful position—but they did not expect the opposition that such moves would create.

The Glasgow Women’s Housing Association, set up before 1914 to fight for better housing conditions, soon galvanised opposition to the planned rent rises.

Organisation

Tens of thousands of people were crammed into overcrowded and poorly maintained tenement housing in the areas closest to the shipyards. But calls for a city-wide rent strike soon spread beyond them. By September 1915 around 20,000 households were on rent strike in Glasgow. The strike was spreading to other parts of the West of Scotland and beyond.

Street level organisation forcibly prevented court officials from entering tenement buildings to carry out evictions.

A decision to prosecute 18 tenants for the non-payment of rents in November led to huge protests.

The Govan Press described “remarkable scenes” as thousands of women marched with shipyard

and engineering workers. It said, “Headed by a band of improvised instruments, including tin whistles, hooters, and a huge drum, the procession aroused a good deal of interest.

“The majority carried large placards with the words: ‘Rent Strikers. We’re not Removing’.”

The tenants’ movement, led overwhelmingly by working class women, was the instrumental force in the fight against the landlords. Growing numbers of shipyard workers, who were fighting for better working conditions and wages, soon supported it.

Legacy

The growing threat of strikes forced the government to intervene by passing a Rent Restrictions Act that froze rents at pre-war levels

But tenants had other issues in their sights, such as the demand for municipal housing provision. This came four years later in the 1919 Housing and Town Planning Act. “Council housing” was born.

A key legacy of 1915 was that the municipal housing provision came to be seen as a right. That was a direct result of the struggles in Glasgow and elsewhere in Britain.

The 1915 tenants’ campaigns informed and shaped opposition to the Poll Tax in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and to the bedroom tax.

The politics of social justice, rights and entitlements informed the fight against landlords and for state housing provision before, during and after the First World War.

The tactics and organisation of the Glasgow tenants’ movement continues to provide important lessons for such struggles.

Gerry is a senior lecturer in social policy and criminology at the Open University in Scotland

WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties. We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women. We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests. We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to www.swp.org.uk or phone 020 7840 5600 for more information

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } PUBLIC MEETINGS

ESSEX

Why are there so few strikes?

Thu 5 Nov, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
Rainsford Rd,
Chelmsford, CM1 2QL
LONDON:HACKNEY
Marxism and Women's Liberation
Book launch with
author Judith Orr.
Thu 29 Oct, 7.30pm,
The Round Chapel,
2 Powerscroft Rd (corner
Lower Clapton Rd), E5 0PU

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } BRANCH MEETINGS

Weekly meetings to discuss political issues and our local interventions. All welcome.

ABERDEEN

Lenin and the revolutionary party

Thu 29 Oct, 6pm,
Belmont Cinema Cafe,
49 Belmont St, AB10 1JS

BARNSELEY

The ideas of Surrealism—
'ceci n'est pas une revolution'

Thu 29 Oct, 6.30pm,
YMCA, Blucher St, S70 1AP
BIRMINGHAM:CITY CENTRE

Capitalism, austerity and disability

Wed 28 Oct, 7pm,
Birmingham LGBT Centre,
38/40 Holloway Circus,
B1 1EQ

BOLTON

How we beat the anti-union laws in the past—and how we can do it today

Wed 28 Oct, 6.30pm,
Bolton Socialist Club,
16 Wood St (off
Bradshawgate), BL1 1DY

BRADFORD

By any means necessary—
Malcolm X and the fight against racism

Wed 28 Oct, 7pm,
Equity Centre, Perkin House,
82 Grattan Rd, BD1 2LU

BRIGHTON

What has happened to the Arab Spring?

Wed 28 Oct, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
Ship St, BN1 1AF

BRISTOL:NORTH

The Kurds and the fight against oppression in Turkey

Thu 29 Oct, 7.30pm,
The Canteen, 5th Floor,
Hamilton House,
80 Stokes Croft, BS1 3QY

BRISTOL:SOUTH

Why we say that migrants are welcome here

Wed 28 Oct, 7.30pm,
YHA, Narrow Quay,
BS1 4QA

CARDIFF

Alienation—tell me why I don't like Mondays

Wed 28 Oct, 7.30pm,
Cathays Community Centre,
Cathays Terrace, CF24 4HX

CHELMSFORD

Human nature—are we too selfish for socialism?

Thu 19 Nov, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
Rainsford Rd, CM1 2QL

CHESTERFIELD

Podemos and the rise of the left in Spain

Thu 29 Oct, 7.30pm,
Chesterfield Library (enter via
Cafe Browser),
New Beetwell St, S40 1QL

COLCHESTER

Prevent—criminalising Muslim people

Tue 27 Oct, 7.30pm,
The Odd One Out,
28 Mersea Rd,
CO2 7ET

COVENTRY

Can Corbynomics work?

Wed 28 Oct, 7.30pm,
West Indian Centre,
159 Spon St, CV1 3BB

SOCIALIST WORKER BRANCH MEETINGS

SUFFRAGETTES
How did women win the vote?

DERBY

Thu 29 Oct, 7pm,
West End Community Centre
(next to Britannia Mill),
Mackworth Rd,
DE22 3BL

GLASGOW:NORTH

Wed 28 Oct, 7.30pm,
Posh Nosh Cafe,
86 Maryhill Rd (near
St George's Cross
Underground), G20 7QB

LONDON:

TOWER HAMLETS

Wed 28 Oct, 7pm,
Oxford House, Derbyshire St
(opposite Bethnal Green
Rd Tesco), E2 6HG

MEDWAY

Thu 5 Nov, 7.30pm,
The Nucleus Arts Centre,

Conference Room,
272 High St, Chatham,
ME4 4BP

SHEFFIELD:

CITY CENTRE

Thu 29 Oct, 7.30pm,
Central United Reformed
Church, 60 Norfolk St (near
the Crucible theatre),
S1 2JB

SWANSEA

Thu 29 Oct, 7.30pm,
Brynmill Community Centre,
St Albans Rd, SA2 0BP

WOLVERHAMPTON
AND WALSALL

Wed 28 Oct, 7.30pm,
Irish Mbassy,
Lichfield St,
Wolverhampton,
WV1 1EQ

A delegation of Suffragettes from London's East End to Downing Street in 1914

DONCASTER

How can Palestine be free?

Wed 28 Oct, 7.30pm,
Women's Centre,
21 Cleveland St, DN1 3EH

DUDLEY

Trident—what do socialists say?

Wed 28 Oct, 8pm,
The What Centre,
23 Coventry St,
Stourbridge (town centre),
DY8 1EP

DUNDEE

How can Palestine be free?

Wed 28 Oct, 7.30pm,
Dundee Voluntary Action,
10 Constitution Rd, DD1 1LL

EDINBURGH

The Kurds and the fight against oppression in Turkey

Wed 28 Oct, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
7 Victoria Terrace, EH1 2JL

EXETER

How we beat the anti-union laws in the past—and how we can do it today

Thu 29 Oct, 7pm,
New Horizon Cafe,
47 Longbrook St, EX4 6AW

HUDDERSFIELD

Will technology create a post-capitalist world?

Wed 28 Oct, 6.30pm,
Brian Jackson House,
2 New North Parade
(near both train and bus
stations), HD1 5JP

KIRKCALDY

Climate change—how do we stop capitalism destroying the planet?

Mon 2 Nov, 7.30pm,
Betty Nicol's pub,
297 High St,
KY1 1JL

LANCASTER

Can Marxism explain oppression?

Thu 29 Oct, 7.15pm,
Friends Meeting House,
Meeting House Lane,
LA1 1TX

LEEDS:CITY CENTRE

A refugee's eyewitness report of the crisis in Syria—why we oppose bombing

Thu 29 Oct, 7pm,
Swarthmore Education Centre,
2-7 Woodhouse Square,
LS3 1AD

LONDON:BRENT & HARROW
Rock Against Racism—when music helped fight fascism

Thu 29 Oct, 7.30pm,
The Pepperpot Centre,
1a Thorpe Close,
Ladbroke Grove (close to the station), W10 5XL

LONDON:BRIXTON

Why we celebrate the Russian Revolution

Wed 28 Oct, 7pm,
Vida Walsh Centre,
2b Saltoun Rd, SW2 1EP

LONDON:CAMDEN

By any means necessary—
Malcolm X and the fight against racism

Thu 29 Oct, 7pm,
Theatro Technis,
26 Crowndale Rd, NW1 1TT

LONDON:EALING

1919—Britain on the brink of revolution

Thu 29 Oct, 7.30pm,
West London Trade Union Club,
33-35 High St, Acton, W3 6ND

LONDON:HORNSEY

AND WOOD GREEN
Crisis in Syria—is there a solution?

Wed 28 Oct, 7.30pm,
West Indian Cultural Centre,
9 Clarendon Rd,
Haringey, N8 0DJ

LONDON:ISLINGTON

Can Corbynomics work?

Thu 29 Oct, 7pm,
The Old Fire Station,
84 Mayton St, N7 6QT

LONDON:KINGSTON

Why we need a revolutionary party

Wed 28 Oct, 7pm,
Kingston Quaker Centre,
Fairfield East, KT1 2PT

LONDON:LEWISHAM

How do we stop the rise of the far right in Europe?

Wed 28 Oct, 7.30pm,
West Greenwich Community

and Arts Centre,
141 Greenwich High Rd (near
Greenwich main line and DLR
Station),
SE10 8JA

LONDON:NEWHAM

Alexandra Kollontai and the fight for women's liberation

Wed 28 Oct, 7pm,
Stratford Advice Arcade,
107-109 The Grove (next to
Morrisons car park),
E15 1HP

LONDON:SOUTHWARK

How we beat anti-union laws in the past—and how we can do it today

Thu 29 Oct, 7pm,
Camberwell Leisure
Centre, Room 2,
Artichoke Place (off
Camberwell Church St),
SE5 8TS

LONDON:TOTTENHAM

What did Lenin say about the Labour Party?

Wed 28 Oct, 7.30pm,
Kitavevi Cafe,
410 Tottenham High Rd,
N17 9JB

LONDON:WALTHAM FOREST

China's economy—a Marxist analysis

Wed 28 Oct, 7.30pm,
Quaker Meeting House,
1a Jewel Rd (off Hoe St),
E17 4QU

MANCHESTER:CITY CENTRE

Crisis in Syria—is there a solution?

Thu 29 Oct, 7pm,
Friends Meeting House,
6 Mount St, M2 5NS

MANCHESTER:CHORLTON
Is the media all powerful?

Wed 28 Oct, 7pm,
Chorlton Central Church
Meeting Room,
Barlow Moor Rd, M21 8BF

MANCHESTER:LONGSIGHT AND LEVENSHULME

Them and us—class struggle in Britain 1910-1930

Wed 28 Oct, 7.30pm,
Food Factory,
884 Stockport Rd,
Levenshulme, M19 3BN

NEWCASTLE

Crisis in Syria—how can it be solved?

Thu 29 Oct, 7pm,
Broadacre House,
Market St, NE1 6HQ

NORWICH

What is the Labour Party?

Thu 29 Oct, 7.30pm,
Vauxhall Centre,
Johnson Place, NR2 2SA

NOTTINGHAM

How can Palestine be free?

Wed 28 Oct, 7.30pm,
International Community
Centre, 61b Mansfield Rd,
NG1 3FN

OXFORD

Greece—why did Syriza fail?

Wed 28 Oct, 7.30pm,
Restore, Manzil Way
(off Cowley Rd), OX4 1YH

PLYMOUTH

Fortress Europe—the war against migrants

Thu 29 Oct, 7pm,
Quaker House,
74 Mutley Plain,
PL4 6LF

POOLE

Russia, Isis and the Arab revolution

Mon 16 Nov, 7.30pm,
The Blue Boar pub (near
multi storey car park),
29 Market Close, BH15 1NE

PORTSMOUTH

Marxism and women's liberation

Wed 28 Oct, 7.30pm,
Somerstown Central,
Rivers St, PO5 4EY

SCARBOROUGH

Climate change—how do we stop capitalism destroying the planet?

Thu 29 Oct, 7pm,
Scarborough Central Library,
Small meeting room,
Vernon Rd, YO11 2NN

SOUTHAMPTON

Is there a working class?

Wed 28 Oct, 7.30pm,
Central Baptist Church Hall,
Devonshire Rd, SO15 2GY

TELFORD

From coal mines to call centres—how has the working class changed?

Thu 26 Nov, 7.30pm,
Oddfellows Arms,
65 High St,
Wellington, TF1 1JT

WIGAN

Crisis in Syria—how can it be solved?

Wed 28 Oct, 7pm,
Little Fifteen pub,
17-19 Wallgate (opposite
Wigan Post Office),
WN1 1LD

{ MOVEMENT EVENTS }

DORCHESTER

Disability rights and the struggle for equality

Sat 7 Nov, 1.30pm,
Colliton Club (opposite
County Hall),
Colliton Park, DT1 1XJ.

Organised by Dorset Socialists.
dorsetsocialists.org.uk

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Fresh footage brings to life the Black Panthers' struggle

The Black Panthers—Vanguard of the Revolution documentary captures the party's sense of revolt but doesn't duck its problems, writes **Ken Olende**

DIRECTOR STANLEY Nelson captures the excitement of the revolutionary Black Panther Party in the late 1960s. But it doesn't hide the problems that contributed to their rapid decline.

It's a serious accomplishment to reflect so many aspects of a group which went through dramatically different phases.

People who joined the Panthers at different points of its explosive growth had dramatically different experience.

This included armed confrontation with the racist police and running breakfast programmes for black children.

Nelson has unearthed new archive footage, showing the relentless police harassment poor black people faced.

Singing

This contrasts with the sheer joy in the Panthers' theatrical mixes of singing, dancing and political speeches.

The film mixes interviews from both then and now with former Panthers and FBI agents.

Interviewees include Panthers who thought they would die as they fought police assaulting their headquarters.

It shows how women went from a tolerated minority expected to do the cooking to the majority of party members, both carrying guns and organising.

The US was in flux in the 1960s and the Panthers saw themselves as the vanguard of a revolution to overthrow capitalism.

Black power songs were on TV pop shows and the Panthers built support among top Hollywood actors, including Jane Fonda and Marlon Brando.

The film benefits from the fact that



WOMEN BECAME a majority in the Black Panther Party at the forefront of the struggle

it's now possible to read details of the FBI's Cointelpro programme.

It was set up to try and split the Panthers, and set its members against each other and other radical organisations.

The film reveals the levels of state infiltration. As one former member says, "We recruited people but didn't know where they were going."

For much of the period of the party's growth, many of its leaders were in prison. The film shows how the

police extra judicially assassinated Fred Hampton, the Panther's charismatic leader in Sacramento.

But the film doesn't shrink from presenting the increasingly erratic and dictatorial sode worse side of party founder Huey Newton.

It's brilliant to hear Panthers Kathleen Cleaver and Erica Huggins talking about the experience.

But it's a pity that such a comprehensive film doesn't include recent interviews with either

surviving founder Bobby Seale or David Hilliard.

All revolutionaries and socialists should rush to see this film. Even better, help organise a local showing.

The Black Panthers—Vanguard of the Revolution

Directed by Stanley Nelson
On limited release. For selected screenings go to theblackpanthers.co.uk
To set up a screening contact Gary McFarlane (NUJ London Magazine Branch equalities officer) gazmac2@gmail.com

Refusing to conform—Arthur Miller's legacy on stage

THEATRE

AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE

Directed by David Thacker.
Octagon Theatre,
Bolton BL1 1SB.
Until 31 October.

THIS NEW production is a powerful revival of Henrik Ibsen's play *An Enemy of the People*.

The play has always been popular with the left, sine Eleanor Marx first translated it from Danish.

The Russian actor Konstantin Stanislavski, who played the lead character Dr. Stockmann

in Petrograd in 1905, remarked, "An Enemy of the People became the favourite play of the revolutionists."

This staging was put on to celebrate the centenary of US play write Arthur Miller's birth.

He adapted it during the height of McCarthyism, the witch hunt of "treacherous" US Communists in the 1950s.

Dr Stockmann is dubbed "a traitor to

society" for seeking to tell the medical truth. He informs people that the town baths' drainage is contaminated. Though initially supportive, the local establishment try to silence him with bribes, threats and violence.

Stockmann starts out politically naive. But his faith in the liberal opposition, the local mayor and the press are

stripped away.

For Miller, the play emphasised "the need to resist the pressure to conform". In 1949 an right wing riot broke up a Paul Robeson concert in Peekskill, New York.

It echoed the riot that destroyed Dr Stockmann's public meeting, as he makes a last ditch attempt to tell people about the medical catastrophe.

Just like some Peekskill survivors kept the rocks that smashed their car

windows, Dr Stockmann saves them as "sacred relics" as reminders for his boys.

Throughout the production, the windows that will be smashed hang ominously over the stage.

Thacker's production carries Ibsen and Miller's message well. Dr Stockmann is branded "an enemy of the people" because of his refusal to bend.

But through his refusal, he begins to understand how society works and resolves to keep fighting.
Dave Gibson



Dr Stockmann (left) fighting back

MUSIC

RACINES

Tiken Jah Fakoly
Wrasse records
Out now
wrasserecords.com

THIS ALBUM'S title is French for "roots". In it reggae star Tiken Jah Fakoly, from Cote D'Ivoire in west Africa, is celebrating both Roots Reggae and the roots of the music.

He recorded much of the album at the legendary Tuff Gong studio in Kingston, Jamaica, with musicians Sly and Robbie.

They provided the rhythm on so many classic cuts.

The album covers songs by reggae artists Burning

Tiken Jah Fakoly

Spear, Peter Tosh and Bob Marley, among others.

And it features guest appearances from artists including U-Roy, Max Romeo and Ken Boothe.

It's a great tribute to the golden age of reggae.

But it is at its strongest when it breaks from recreating the sound of the 1970s to build on Fakoly's own more African reggae style.

TOP 5 BOOKS

Great reads at Bookmarks, the socialist Bookshop

- We go to the gallery**
Miriam and Ezra Elia
- Syriza: Inside the Labyrinth**
Kevin Ovenden
- PostCapitalism: A Guide to Our Future**
Paul Mason
- The Global Minotaur: America, Europe and the Future of the Global Economy**
Yanis Varoufakis
- A Rebel's Guide to Eleanor Marx**
Siobhan Brown

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1 Bloomsbury Street,
London WC1B 3QE

CLARA Zetkin was a revolutionary, a Marxist and a courageous fighter for socialism and women's liberation.

She has been claimed as a pacifist and a feminist because she stood up for women's rights and opposed war.

But such labels misrepresent her revolutionary Marxism, which two new books will bring to a fresh audience.

The books contain selections of Zetkin's writings, speeches and letters.

They give a glimpse of the scale of her contribution to the Marxist tradition and the debates of her day—particularly around the question of fighting against women's oppression.

They show just how sharp her writing and speeches were, and how she used humour to mock her enemies.

Zetkin was rooted in the German socialist movement from the age of 20 in the late 19th century.

But she was to become an international figure at the turn of the last century.

From the start she was an activist. Apart from ten years in political exile she worked all her adult life to build the socialist movement in Germany.

Zetkin was part of the mass socialist German Social Democratic Party (SPD), which declared itself Marxist.

Reform

But it contained both revolutionaries, such as Zetkin and Rosa Luxemburg, and those who wanted to reform the system.

Zetkin was the forefront of the German Revolution from 1918. The SPD failed the test of leading the working class and the revolutionary minority broke to form its own organisation.

She was one of the few who, alongside Luxemburg, stood out against the imperialist slaughter of the First World War.

To their shame, the majority of the SPD leadership supported the German state's war effort.

Her early active years had been spent organising illegally under Germany's anti-socialist laws during the 1890s.

Women were specifically barred from forming political organisations with men and from public speaking.

The SPD found ways to get round the law. Socialist women set up political groups under the guise of being “educational” classes.

They were so successful in pulling women workers into political organisation the party maintained them even after the law changed.

One SPD member Louise Zietz recounted how women got round the law banning



ZETKIN— A CLASS FIGHTER

Activists have always fought over Clara Zetkin's contribution to women's liberation. Judith Orr argues that she was a revolutionary who saw workers as key to ending oppression



Clara Zetkin

women from public speaking. “A male comrade spoke for ten minutes, and then I participated in the discussion from the floor, by speaking for one and a half hours,” she said.

Zetkin is often best known for proposing the launch of International Women's Day.

This was envisaged as an opportunity to celebrate the struggle of women workers for the vote and equal pay.

Her commitment to women's liberation has meant activists



She welcomed the massive influx of women into the workforce

have fought over her political legacy since the rise of the Women's Liberation Movement in the 1960s and 70s.

Zetkin has been claimed as a feminist partly because of a misunderstanding of her view of oppression and class.

She saw that class was the key divide in society.

In the same way as activists today refer to the one per cent at the top of society Zetkin wrote of the gilded lives of the “the upper ten thousand” in

German society.

But she understood both that oppression reached across the class divide and was shaped by it.

She pointed out the contradictions for a woman of this social class who “by virtue of her possession of property, can freely develop her individuality—she can live in accordance with her inclinations.”

Yet she also recognised that as a wife, such a woman was still “legally subjected to the man.”

Zetkin expresses trenchant criticism of privileged women, the middle class feminists who solely fought for their rights to be equal to “the men of their class”. But this did not mean she ignored their oppression.

SHE WROTE of wealthy women, “the wife is tired of living like a doll in a doll house, where she wants to take part in the broader development of modern culture.”

“And on both the economic and intellectual-moral sides the strivings of the bourgeois feminists are entirely justified.”

But this didn't mean she had illusions that such women had the same interests as working women.

She argued that the question of women's liberation was not an isolated one but “rather constitutes a part of the great social question.”

“The emancipation of women as well of all human-kind will only occur within the framework of the emancipation of labour from capital.”

Zetkin argued that the system of exploitation, which capitalism is based on, is the root cause of oppression.

Most importantly she saw the significance of the fact that “the machine makes muscular strength unnecessary, and everywhere women's labour could operate with the same results for production as man's.”

So she welcomed the massive influx of women into the workforce at the beginning of the 20th century.

She did not see class as simply another element of suffering experienced by a particular individual.

Despite the low pay and bad conditions they endured, she understood that women were gaining the potential for collective resistance.

Zetkin edited a paper for women workers called Gleichheit (Equality) for over 25 years.

It was selling 112,000 copies by 1913. The number of women joining the SPD exploded during the same period, from 4,000 in 1905, to over 141,000 by 1913.

Zetkin saw it as a tool for the most militant and politicised sections of women workers.

She wanted to build a revolutionary leadership in the

working class.

This caused tensions with the reformist wing of the SPD, which argued that Zetkin made the newspaper “too difficult” for the mass of women.

She was told it should include a fashion supplement and cooking advice.

Zetkin refused, and argued that women activists did not need to be talked down to.

She raged against the prejudice that claimed that “women's smaller brain, or their alleged natural vocation as mothers” deemed them incapable of “intellectual labour”.

It was only when she became part of a minority of revolutionary Marxists in the SPD that she lost control of the paper. It began to include recipes and dress patterns.

When she was removed as editor in 1917 she maintained her defiance against the pro-war majority in her own party. She said that “to have been silent would have been to assume an attitude of undignified cowardice.”

After the defeat of the German Revolution and the rise of Stalinism in Russia, Zetkin no longer played the same role.

Poor

She spent much time in poor health being cared for in Soviet hospitals.

But she briefly took to the political stage again in 1932, just months before Hitler took power.

On 30 August she came out of hiding. Despite her state of health, blindness and Nazi death threats she returned to Berlin.

It was her right as the oldest MP to convene a new session of parliament—and she was determined to use it.

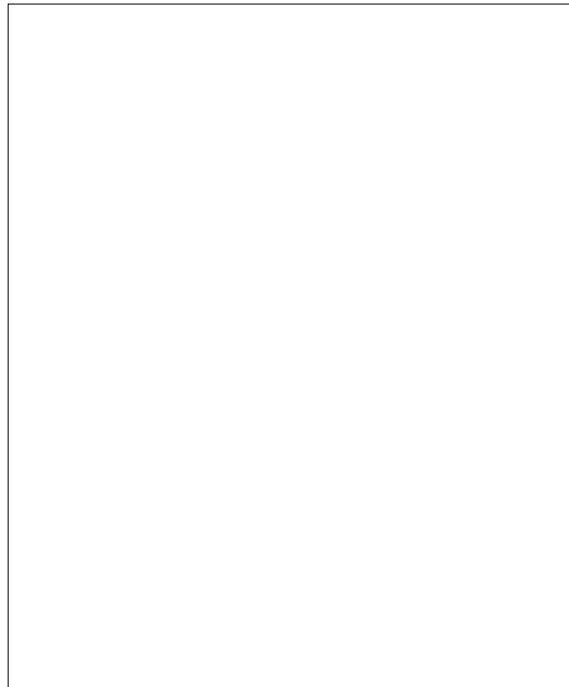
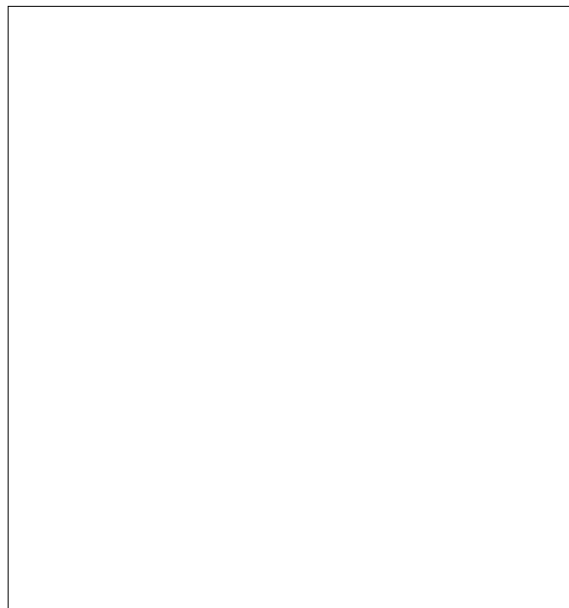
She was transported by stretcher from an ambulance, past Nazi demonstrators, and took to the rostrum. Although frail she spoke for over an hour.

She railed against the fascists, in front of the many Nazi members, and called for a united front to take them on.

And she made sure to call for the inclusion of women in the struggle. She finished by declaring, “I hope, despite my present illness, to have the happy experience of opening the First Council Congress of Soviet Germany as its oldest member.”

But it was not to be. She died the following year.

She was a giant of the socialist movement and



An International Women's Day march in Moscow in 1917 (top) and Clara Zetkin and Rosa Luxemburg (bottom)

stood up against oppression and imperialism.

She saw the working class as the social force that could challenge the system that bred them—and transform society.

Some of her formulations will jar to the modern reader.

Even she sometimes wrote of socialism enabling women to be happier wives and mothers.

But she was far ahead of so many others, with insights that remain valuable today.

She saw that if the working class was stronger when it fought “together without distinction of nationality or distinction of occupation” then “so also it can achieve its emancipation, only if it holds together without distinction of sex.”

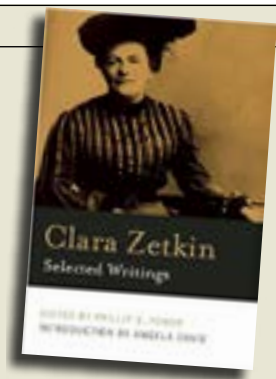
READ MORE

● **Clara Zetkin and the German Socialist Feminist Movement** by Tony Cliff, International Socialism journal tinyurl.com/or29c4r

● **Clara Zetkin: Letters and Writings** Revolutionary History £20

● **Clara Zetkin: Selected Writings** Published by Haymarket £12.99

Available at Bookmarks, the socialist bookshop. Phone 020 7637 1848 or go to bookmarksbookshop.co.uk



ECONOMICS

What's so bad about 'deficit denial' anyway?

George Osborne and John McDonnell have different strategies for eliminating the deficit. But Nick Clark argues for a bolder approach

LABOUR'S NEW leadership is getting tied up in knots over the deficit.

MPs voted last week on Tory chancellor George Osborne's fiscal charter. He says it will force governments to maintain a budget surplus even in “normal times” from 2019.

This means the government will never be allowed to run a deficit—to spend more money in a year than it gets through taxes.

Osborne and the Tories have used getting rid of the deficit to justify austerity.

Though no amount of austerity has stopped him missing all his previous made-up deficit targets.

Labour shadow chancellor John McDonnell had initially said he would back the charter. But in the end he rightly whipped Labour MPs to oppose it.

McDonnell has a strong record of fighting austerity—even from his own party.

Yet he insists he is not a “deficit denier” and that Labour is still committed to getting rid of the deficit.

So why is the deficit so important?

Politicians talk about “living within our means” to make it sound like common sense. But the government's finances are nothing like those of an individual or household.

Governments with a deficit make up the shortfall by selling bonds to bankers and financial traders. The government promises to buy them back in the future. Until then it pays interest.

In times of crisis, when governments most need to sell bonds, investors don't trust them to pay them back—so they demand more interest.

Governments face pressure to impose austerity and prove they can pay their debts.

This is blackmail by the

JOHN MCDONNELL opposes George Osborne's austerity

BACK STORY

George Osborne's “Fiscal Charter” commits future governments to running a budget surplus

● He says it will eliminate the deficit—though he's missed all his previous made-up deficit targets

● Shadow chancellor John McDonnell says he would eliminate the deficit by taxing the rich

● He sowed confusion by saying Labour MPs would vote for the charter, then rightly came out against it

government's debt shot up after the financial crash of 2008. It spent £850 billion bailing out the banks.

That crisis had nothing to do with too much public spending. And the day after it there weren't suddenly fewer resources in the world, or fewer workers who can turn them into useful goods and services.

So McDonnell is right to refuse to sign up to austerity.

He wants to get rid of the deficit by cutting subsidies to landlords and big businesses, clamping down on tax avoidance and investing to create jobs.

It's hugely encouraging to hear a shadow chancellor talk about making the rich pay.

But Labour is also trying to prove it is “responsible” enough to manage the system, and that's where its new left wing leadership has come unstuck.

The crash was caused by capitalism's long term crisis of profitability. Capitalists invest in new technology to get ahead of their rivals. But since all profits come from exploiting workers, this pulls their profit rate down.

So bosses try and boost profitability again by squeezing workers. This can mean cutting wages, or sacking some workers to squeeze more out of the rest.

So for the bosses, the only responsible thing is to attack workers through austerity.

The pressure to eliminate the deficit is their weapon for enforcing those attacks.

It is not a problem workers need to solve.



The deficit only became a problem when they bailed out the banks

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Mukhtar Master

Children of the Ghetto campaign group, chair (pc)

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More than arms—the link with Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is notorious for its human rights abuses, its treatment of women and migrant workers. Yet it enjoys a cosy relationship with Britain’s rulers. **Dave Sewell** explains why

DAVID CAMERON came under fire this month over a plan to hire out British prison officials to train their Saudi counterparts.

That Saudi prison system is currently planning to behead and crucify 17 year old Ali Mohammed al-Nimr for attending a protest.

It’s also making headlines over plans to give 74 year old British national Karl Andree 360 lashes for transporting homemade wine.

These examples barely scratch the surface of injustice in one of the world’s most repressive regimes, notorious for its treatment of women and migrant workers (see below).

Why is the British government so friendly with it?

Cameron was eventually forced to cancel the £5.9 million contract—not without fierce resistance in case it hurt the government’s “wider interests”.

Telegraph columnist Con Coughlin railed against letting an “unnecessary diplomatic squabble” over human rights spoil a “strategic relationship” with “the region’s rapidly emerging military superpower”.

Military

Saudi Arabia now has the world’s fourth highest military spending at £37 billion a year, having overtaken Britain and France and rapidly catching up with Russia.

And it has used its firepower to devastating effect in the Saudi-led bombing and invasion of Yemen.

More than 2,300 civilians have been killed, according to the United Nations—with an estimated 130 deaths from one airstrike on a wedding last month.



PRINCE KHALID bin Faisal bin Abdulaziz welcomes David Cameron to Saudi Arabia

Many of the planes it is using are British-made Typhoons and Tornados.

Saudi Arabia has also made itself the headquarters of counter-revolution in the Middle East.

It is one of the main financial backers of Egypt’s murderous regime.

And it sent troops to crush the uprising against its client regime in Bahrain. There too British-made weapons were used.

Britain’s military export licences to Saudi Arabia include “crowd-control” ammunition, hand grenades and tear-gas.

Saudi contracts bring huge profits for British arms exporters—who have repeatedly been in trouble over corruption to keep them coming.

In a £2 billion contract in 2010, one firm allegedly put £300 million straight into offshore bank accounts for kickbacks to Saudi officials.

Despite the prison U-turn, these arms exports keep flowing.

But the link between Britain’s rulers and the despotic House of Saud is about more than money.

It goes right back to Saudi Arabia’s surprisingly modern origins.

Britain’s government signed a pact

with reactionary warlord Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud 100 years ago.


The West’s backing helped Ibn Saud establish a dynasty—and keeps it in power today.

And the Saudis gave the imperialist powers a bulwark against movements that could have challenged them.

Today the West’s disastrous wars and the crushing of the Arab revolutions have plunged the Middle East into a chaos that threatens both the warmongers and the regimes.

That common interest puts them in a bind that neither can afford to break.

Gove has his own agenda

 **LABOUR** leader Jeremy Corbyn rightly opposed the Saudi prison deal. But so did Tory justice secretary Michael Gove.

Not only is Gove an expert self-publicist but he is also an Islamophobe obsessed with rooting out “extremism”. He wrote a book after the 7/7 bombings calling for an end to “appeasement” of Islamic fundamentalism.

This would mean scapegoating and spying on Muslims in Britain on an unprecedented scale. Gove put his crusade into practice as education secretary, with the “Trojan Horse” witch hunt into Birmingham schools.

That such a bigot could rise to a senior cabinet position is a product of New Labour and the Tories’ turn to Islamophobia.

Terror

This helped first to justify the “War on Terror”, then to deflect anger at austerity away from themselves.

The ideological movement most influential on real Islamic fundamentalists is the one promoted by the Saudi regimes.

British politicians use racist myths about “Asian values” or the “traditions” of other societies to justify backing dictators. The Saudis are no exception.

The Tories’ excuses collide with their scapegoating—exposing the hypocrisy of both.

Slavery and bigotry—the regime the Tories support

 **THE** Saudi government is entirely made up of princes, hand-picked for their ministerial posts by the king.

Its elites live in staggering opulence—the fruits of the country’s oil wealth.

But for the migrants who make up most of its working class it’s a different story.

Violent mass deportations have been

a regular occurrence in recent years. The authorities boasted of deporting 300,000 people in the five months to March of this year—a rate of 2,000 a day.

Around half a million migrant domestic workers work in Saudi Arabia.

Many of them are on visas that deny them the right to change jobs and require the employer’s permission to leave the country.

This traps them in “near slavery”.

Horrific cases of abuse, rape, imprisonment and torture have come to light.

Bodies

The Saudi construction boom is built on the bodies of workers forced to risk their lives in unsafe conditions.

This led to the shocking crane collapse in Mecca that killed over 100 people during the Hajj

pilgrimage last month.

Over 1,600 pilgrims were killed in a crush that the Saudi authorities initially tried to blame on the victims.

Women are banned from driving, and need the permission of a male guardian—typically their father, husband or brother—for most aspects of their lives.

Adultery can be punishable by death. So can homosexuality.

Shia Muslims and other religious minorities face widespread official and unofficial discrimination.

But the Arab Spring showed that the Saudi regime was no more immune to challenge from below than its neighbours.

Women held a driving campaign, workers walked out and street protests demanded democracy.

The tensions that produced that revolt haven’t gone away.

IN BRIEF

Workers pour cold water on bosses

WORKERS AT Northumbrian Water began indefinite action short of strike on Tuesday of this week.

The GMB and Unite union members are fighting bosses' attacks on their final salary pension scheme. The action follows ballots by both unions.

EDF energy strike called off for talks

THE UNITE union called off a planned week-long strike of around 70 EDF energy workers on Friday of last week for talks at conciliation service Acas.

The action was set to start on Monday of this week as part of a broader dispute involving around 500 staff.

Unite regional officer Onay Kasab said EDF made a "significant concession" on the main issue of working hours.

Activists prepare to take on developers

HOUSING campaigners from across London were set to protest outside the Mipim property fair at the Olympia centre in West London on Wednesday of this week.

Mipim brings together representatives of councils and other public bodies with private developers for networking and making deals.

Private firms can make huge profits building on public land.

And councils hit by funding cuts are clearing out council estates to get a piece of the action.

PCS stops court fines privatisation

MINISTRY OF Justice bosses have retreated from privatising one of their agencies after campaigning by the PCS civil service workers' union.

They had been planning for the last five years to outsource the National Compliance and Enforcement Service, which collects court fines. But the government has said it will still pursue "in house modernisation" instead.

Demo for Lambeth libraries called

AROUND 60 people joined a meeting against library closures at the Minet Library in Lambeth, south London, on Monday night of this week.

And 50 attended a similar meeting at the Tate South Lambeth Library last Saturday.

The Labour council is pushing through the closure of seven libraries.

Activists have called a demo for 7 November from Brixton to council cabinet member Jane Edbrooke's surgery.

●Go to Facebook page March to Save the Libraries

EDUCATION



ESOL STUDENTS protesting outside parliament

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

Hundreds lobby MPs to stop cut to courses

by SADIE ROBINSON

AROUND 600 students and lecturers lobbied MPs in parliament on Wednesday of last week. They were protesting against funding cuts to English for Speakers of Other Languages (Esol) provision.

The Tories slashed adult education funding by 24 percent earlier this year. On top of this they cut funding for "Esol plus mandation" in July.

This hit around 16,000 Job Seekers' Allowance claimants who have been told to improve their English to find jobs.

Rafique Uddi, a student at Tower Hamlets College in east London, joined the protest. "If we can't improve our English it's very difficult to find a job,"

he said. Amanda, originally from Columbia, agreed. "Living in London is very expensive," she said. "I need Esol to find a job."

Hypocrisy

One Esol lecturer from Greenwich Community College in south east London pointed to the Tories' hypocrisy.

She said, "They're all under pressure from the job centre to get jobs—unless they improve their English they can't do it."

"We lost about 40 percent of our students because they are now not eligible for free Esol and they can't afford to pay."

Another lecturer from south London's Lewisham and Southwark College said, "There's no training for staff and no time to support people. If someone is off sick there's no

one to cover for them. There has to be a knock-on effect on students."

Other protesters stressed the wider impact that being cut off from learning English can have. Samah said her Esol class was "the most important" thing to her. "It encourages us to look for courses in other subjects," she said.

Homemade placards read, "No Esol—no voice" and "Help us learn".

Samah said lack of English can leave people isolated—and that immigration policies make it worse. "It's hard in Britain if you don't have family," she said. "I had to have a caesarean in hospital and I would look to my family for help. But they are not allowed to come here."

●Go to actionforesol.org

FURTHER EDUCATION

Colleges to strike over pay

FURTHER education lecturers in England are set to strike on 10 November over pay. The UCU union members voted by nearly 74 percent for strikes after bosses announced a pay freeze.

Workers are fighting for a rise of £1 an hour for all.

A motion passed at the union's further education committee last Saturday agreed that "further targeted action" would be needed to win concessions.

It resolved to protest at the Department for Business, Skills and Innovation in central London on 10 November. But

many workers rightly want the pay fight to be part of a struggle to defend education.

A statement from the UCU Left, which Socialist Worker supporters are part of, said the union has failed "to build a mass campaign to defend the sector or to convince members angry about pay that we can win".

But the strike vote reflects workers' anger—and their willingness to fight back.

As the Tories plan to announce more cuts next month, activists must urgently pile pressure on the union to lead a fight that can win.

ISLAMOPHOBIA

Students across Britain are organising against the Tories' Islamophobic Prevent strategy.

Prevent forces universities to report students to the police if they suspect them

of "extremism".

The Students Not Suspects tour was organised by the NUS Black Students campaign, the Federation of Islamic Societies (Fosis), the UCU lecturers' union and Defend the Right

to Protest.

It held meetings at a number of universities last week. Further ones were set to take place at Manchester Metropolitan University on Wednesday of this

week and Strathclyde University on Thursday.

●Go to Facebook pages **Students Not Suspects Tour—Manchester and Students Not Suspects Tour—Strathclyde**

Solid strike at Small Heath

TEACHERS AT Small Heath School in Birmingham struck on Tuesday of this week against plans to turn the school into an academy.

NUT, NASUWT and ATL union members all joined the walkout. One union rep at the school told Socialist Worker that the action was "totally solid".

"Hardly anyone has gone into the school," he said. "We've had three picket lines and parents have been on the picket lines too."

Small Heath was one of the schools targeted in the Trojan Horse scandal. It was put into special measures and is now run by an Interim Executive Board (IEB).

He said it was a "hard" situation for teachers to be in. But he added, "That makes people's willingness



Striking in May

to fight more inspiring."

Tuesday's walkout was workers' third in the dispute. They plan to strike on 18 November and 10 December.

The union rep said the IEB has refused to meet unions and refused Acas talks.

"Staff understand we will need to escalate," he said.

●Send messages of support to banut@btclick.com

BASELINE TESTING

EDUCATION campaigners are urging supporters to sign a petition opposing Tory plans to bring in tests for four year olds.

The plan would subject children to "baseline" assessments when they enter reception classes. The Tories

want to use them to increase monitoring of schools and teachers' "performance"—and justify "intervention" in the future.

●To sign the petition go to chn.ge/1KugkgO and for more details on the campaign go to betterwithoutbaseline.org.uk

DISABLED PEOPLE

UN heads welfare probe

UNITED Nations (UN) officials have arrived in Britain to investigate whether welfare reforms have led to "grave or systematic violations" of disabled people's human rights.

The Special Rapporteur for Disability and others will tour

Britain taking evidence from individuals and campaigns.

A complaint from Disabled People Against Cuts initiated the investigation.

Disability campaign Black Triangle is making another complaint about the death of Michael O'Sullivan.

OBITUARY

Les Leaver 1950-2015

COMRADES IN Sheffield are saddened to report the death of Les Leaver, a long-standing and loyal member of the Socialist Workers' Party (SWP).

Les was a working class man who defended and argued for revolutionary politics. It didn't matter whether he was at work, in the pub with friends or displaying his class hatred at a local SWP branch meeting.

Les was a stalwart when it came to the Saturday paper sale. He conversed with and challenged anyone with his tenacity and easy empathy.

Over the last year Les was diagnosed with a particularly nasty cancer, which he approached in the matter of fact way he always approached life. His was a life cut short at 65.

He was determined and delighted to attend Marxism Festival 2015 despite his



rapid deterioration. He was out recently in Sheffield demonstrating in support of refugees—a comrade to the last.

Les was excited by Jeremy Corbyn becoming Labour leader and the space it opened up for socialists—but reminded all of the need for a revolutionary party.

His branch meeting contributions and ability to articulate ideas for all to understand will be sadly missed.

We fight on with Les in our thoughts.

Trevor Goodfield, Sheffield SWP

TRAFFIC WARDENS

Camden win puts clamp on bosses

by TOMÁŠ TENGEY-EVANS

A MASS union meeting of traffic wardens in Camden, central London, has accepted a new pay offer from bosses.

The Unison union members have forced a 5.4 percent pay rise from the NSL outsourcer following 11 days of walkouts.

Traffic wardens and CCTV operators will now receive a basic rate of £9.40 an hour, up from £8.82, back-dated from 1 April.

The deal covers basic contractual hours, annual leave and sick pay, which is paid after three days.

This is a real improvement—and marks an important step forward against union-bashing outsourcers.

Workers were demanding £9.50 an hour and better terms and conditions.

But they wouldn't have won these concessions without going on strike and threatening to escalate.

Camden Unison branch secretary George Binette said, "The action workers took—undoubtedly the week-long strike—had a real impact."

The new pay deal is also significant because it stands just above the London Living Wage.

George said, "This shows that the Living Wage should only be a minimum benchmark and that people have every right to fight for better pay."

The dispute was also about terms and conditions.

"NSL has agreed, in principle, to talks at the Acas conciliation service



TRAFFIC WARDENS on strike last month

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

about issues not directly linked to pay," explained George.

Bosses have also reduced the annual bonus pot from a maximum of £1,000 a year to £850 to make up for the basic rate increase.

That's a 15 percent decrease—down from their initial proposal to halve it.

George said, "Parking is a difficult

sector for unions to organise—that we've won a deal on another parking contract is significant.

"I think we need to coordinate with Unite and the GMB to stop the outsourcers' race to the bottom."

Workers didn't win all of their demands. But the traffic wardens have shown that workers can beat union-bashing bosses.

ANTI-FASCISM

Anti-nazis in Burton see off the fascist Britain First

Racists outnumbered in Burton and Scarborough

ANTI-FASCISTS outnumbered Nazis in Scarborough, North Yorkshire, and Burton upon Trent, Staffordshire, last Saturday.

Up to 150 anti-Nazis came out against the racist EDL in Scarborough. They formed a line

across the shopping precinct in the town centre and drowned out the Nazis speeches with chanting.

Meanwhile some 250 protesters stood up to fascist group Britain First in Burton. *Kim Hunter and Ursula Walker*

REFUGEES

Shut down detention centre

CAMPAIGNERS ARE planning a mass protest against Yarl's Wood detention centre on Saturday 7 November. The "Surround Yarl's Wood—Shut it down!" protest was called by the Movement for Justice.

Joseph Mpanga is helping to publicise the protest. He was held in detention centres in Britain while appealing a Home Office decision to refuse him leave to remain.

Joseph told Socialist Worker, "I've been out of detention for just over a month. I

was in Tinsley and then Harmondsworth.

"Detention is so demeaning, so humiliating, so unreasonable. The government says it's done to help people—but it's just the opposite."

● Surround Yarl's Wood – Shut it down! Saturday 7 November, 1.30pm, Yarl's Wood IRC, TwinWoods Business Park, Thurleigh Road, Milton Ernest, MK44 1FD. Transport is organised from various cities. Go to facebook.com/events/755942137885113/ for details

MUSEUMS

Workers to walk out in Wales

MEMBERS OF the PCS union at the National Museum Wales were set to strike on Tuesday of this week.

The museum workers are fighting bosses' plans to

scrap premium payments for weekend working.

The workers have walked out in a series of strikes since July.

They suspended action last month after receiving a new

OFFSHORE WORKERS

Working at sea for 26 days

CLAIMS BY bosses that no offshore oil worker would spend longer than 21 days on a rig as a result of new shift patterns were exposed as a lie last week.

Some staff on the Ninian Central platform spent 26 consecutive days offshore after poor weather conditions had prevented helicopter transfers.

The news came as the result of a strike ballot of staff working in the Caterers Offshore Trade Association was set to be announced this week.

Meanwhile Socialist Worker understands that divers have voted to reject a pay offer for this year.

MANUFACTURING

NHA strikers plough ahead

TRACTOR manufacturing workers at New Holland Agriculture were set to hold their fourth 24-hour strike on Wednesday of this week in a dispute over pay.

The Unite union members in Basildon, Essex, last struck on Wednesday of last week.

Their action has already forced bosses to make concessions.

They offered a pay increase of 2 percent for 2015 and 1.5 percent for 2016, plus an increase in the rate for "non-productive" days.

But workers voted by 74 percent to reject the offer and hold out for more.

UNISON UNION

Burgess is the candidate for rank and file members

NOMINATIONS ARE in for the election of the next general secretary of the Unison union. Many union activists are clearly looking for a change of leadership.

Incumbent Dave Prentis has a third of the nominations he got in the last election. Over 200 branches back him.

National official for local government Heather Wakefield has 89 nominations. Left wing candidates John Burgess and Roger Bannister have 69 and 25 respectively.

These could change. A number of nominations have been challenged. Branches can appeal until the end of October.

Bannister has called on the other two candidates to discuss fielding one

"anti-Prentis" candidate.

But Tower Hamlets Unison branch secretary John McLoughlin (pc) told Socialist Worker, "We need a genuine rank and file candidate, not just an anti-Prentis one."

Despite having the fewest nominations, Bannister is still standing.

The left should be united in this opportunity to challenge the leadership. Wakefield is tainted by the same failures as Prentis.

The key task now is to build John's campaign and to leaflet Unison workplaces when the ballot opens next month.

● National organising meeting, Sat 31 Oct, 1-4pm, Room L67, Lower Ground Floor, Main Soas building, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG.

TRANSPORT ROUND-UP

Cleaners and security staff strike on the DLR

● SECURITY and cleaning staff working for Interserve on London's Docklands Light Railway struck for 48 hours over pay last week.

It was fourth walkout by the RMT union members in their pay campaign.

● LONDON Underground bosses announced last week that their plans for Night Tube will be delayed until next year, after a reorganisation of stations has finished.

Tube workers successfully fought the imposition of new, worse conditions with two complete shutdowns of the network involving all four Tube workers' unions.

Bosses insisted that this year's pay negotiations be linked to talks over Night Tube, which means any pay rise may not happen until next year.

Unions now need to force bosses to sort out pay negotiations this year.

● WORKERS AT rail freight firm Freightliner Railport were set to strike over pay and a two-tier workforce on Thursday and Friday of this week.

● DRIVERS AT Arriva Trains Wales were set to strike on Thursday and Friday of this week in a fight over pay.

JUNIOR DOCTOR REVOLT GROWS

by TOMÁŠ TENĚLY-EVANS

MORE THAN 20,000 junior doctors and their supporters marched through central London last Saturday.

Around 1,000 also joined a protest in Nottingham.

The doctors are fighting Tory health secretary Jeremy Hunt's plans to impose new contracts.

These would rip up terms and conditions and put patient safety at risk.

To chants of "Hunt must go" and "Save our NHS" the London march snaked down Whitehall and held an unplanned sit down protest.

Rebecca from Liverpool summed up the mood. "We have absolutely no confidence in Jeremy Hunt," she said. "He's a liar."

Ballot

The doctors' organisation, the British Medical Association (BMA), has said it will ballot its members for industrial action.

The junior doctors' revolt is growing. Delegations came from across Britain—and many like Rebecca booked



JUNIOR DOCTORS march down Whitehall in London in protest at new contracts

PICTURE: JULIE SHERRY

annual leave to attend the protest.

Emily, from Manchester, said, "I've come because we've got to make sure the public knows about the Tories' lies."

The doctors' fight is about

more than just fears of up to a 40 percent pay cut.

Hunt says he wants to bring in "seven day" working but the NHS is already a 24/7 service.

"They're trying to cripple the NHS—it's a pathway

to privatisation," said Nicki, from London.

"People will have less confidence in the NHS and it will be easier to privatise."

Doctors work long hours but Hunt's contracts would make it worse. Emily

explained, "I worked 89 hours last week. But the new contracts would remove the safeguards that make NHS trusts monitor how long we can work."

Amy added, "We already work 12 hours without a

break because there's no time to take one."

This would put patient safety at risk. Nicki said, "Tired doctors working 90-100 hours a week would not be good for patients."

The Tories are desperately trying to stop the doctors from taking industrial action, fearing a bigger revolt in the NHS.

Nurses

Naveed from Liverpool said, "If they get this through then they'll come for the nurses and other health workers."

Other health workers joined the demonstration with union banners.

Sam, a Unison union member, said "I've been going round the hospital talking to workers about the junior doctors."

"You've got band 2 support workers supporting the doctors—that's a real shift and shows the anger."

Sam pointed out that Unison general secretary Dave Prentis said he'd lead a fight over unsocial hours.

"We need to join the fight now," she said.

Longer online bit.ly/1jwXqju

Shaker Aamer due to return to Britain this week

by JOHN CLOSSICK

SHAKER AAMER, the last British resident held in the US prison camp at Guantanamo Bay, has finally been told he is to be released.

He was held for 13 years. Consistent grassroots campaigning in Britain, led by the Save Shaker Aamer Campaign and Reprieve has resulted in US president Barack Obama announcing his release.

Shaker went to Afghanistan to work for an Islamic charity in 2001, and was there when the US invaded.

US forces rendered

him to Guantanamo Bay claiming he had been fighting for Al Qaida.

Shaker's case has been taken up by an all-party parliamentary group (APPG), celebrities and the media.

He is now due to return

to Britain this Saturday—Shaker's 5,000th day in Guantanamo.

Some of the previous 16 detainees released to Britain still found their returns delayed.

The APPG has said if Shaker is not freed there

will be an immediate parliamentary question to David Cameron.

The US admitted in 2007 it had no evidence against Shaker and said he would be freed.

But it tried to deport him to Saudi Arabia where he was born and would continue to be gagged.

Shaker is an iconic leader of the prisoners and of several hunger strikes. He is known in Guantanamo as "The Prof" for his outspokenness, leadership and determination.

The US is on the point of blocking further Guantanamo transfers, so the campaign continues.

Find out more saveshaker.org



Protest at M16 building in London in 2013

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

Tax credits cut under fire

MPS DEBATED George Osborne's plan to slash £4 billion from tax credits on Tuesday of this week.

Three million working households stand to lose an average of £1,300 a year. This will push 200,000 children into poverty, according to one study.

The Tories justify their £12 billion welfare cut by scapegoating unemployed people. But reaching that figure means attacking those in work too.

The policy is under fire from Tories afraid of losing votes—especially since a Tory voter broke down on the BBC's Question Time

Tory voter attacked cut on TV

programme last week.

It is rumoured to face an exceptional challenge in the House of Lords.

But it will take more than this to beat Osborne. **Dave Sewell**